





THE
CHILD'S PICTORIAL
HISTORY OF ENGLAND.

(1)



DEATH OF LLEWELLYN.



DUKE OF MARLBOROUGH.

THE CHILD'S
PICTORIAL
HISTORY OF ENGLAND;

FROM THE
EARLIEST PERIOD TO THE PRESENT TIME.

BY MISS CORNER,
AUTHOR OF THE HISTORY OF ENGLAND, GREECE, ROME, FRANCE,
SPAIN, AND PORTUGAL.

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CHAPTER I.

THE ANCIENT BRITONS.



ANCIENT BRITONS.

1. WOULD you not like to read about your own country, and to know what sort of people lived in it a long while ago, and whether they were any thing like us? Indeed, they were not; neither was England, in ancient times, such as it is now.

2. There were no great cities, no fine buildings, no pleasant gardens, parks, or nice roads to go from one place to another; but the people lived in caves, or in the woods, in clusters of huts, which they called towns.

3. The country was not then called England, but Britain; and its inhabitants were called Britons. They were divided into many tribes; and each tribe had a king or chief, like the North American Indians; and these chiefs often went to war with one another.

4. Some of the tribes lived like savages, for they had no clothes but skins, and did not know how to cultivate the land: so they had no bread, but got food to eat by hunting animals in the forests, fishing in the rivers, and some of them by keeping herds of small hardy cattle, and gathering wild roots and acorns, which they roasted and eat.

5. But all the Britons were not equally uncivilized, for those who dwelt on the south coasts of the island, had learned many useful things from the Gauls, a people then living in the country now called France, who used to come over to trade with them, and with many families of Gauls who had at various times settled amongst them.

6. They grew corn, brewed ale, made butter

and cheese, and a coarse woollen cloth for their clothing. And they knew how to dye the wool of several colors, for they wore plaid trowsers and tunics, and dark colored woollen mantles, in shape like a large open shawl.

7. Perhaps you would like to know what they had to sell to the Gauls; so I will tell you. Britain was famous for large dogs; and there was plenty of tin; and the South Britons sold also corn and cattle, and the prisoners which had been taken in war, who were bought for slaves; and you will be sorry to hear that many of the ancient Britons sold their children into slavery.

8. They carried these goods in carts, drawn by oxen, to the coast of Hampshire, then crossed over to the Isle of Wight, in light boats, made of wicker, and covered with hides or skins, in shape something like half a walnut shell.

9. The merchants from Gaul met them in the Isle of Wight; and as they brought different kinds of merchandise to dispose of, they managed their business almost entirely without money, by exchanging one thing for another.

10. The Britons were very clever in making things of wicker work, in the form of baskets, shields, coated with hides, boats, and chariots, with flat wooden wheels.

11. These chariots were used in war, and sharp scythes were fixed to the axles of the wheels, which made terrible havoc when driven through a body of enemies.

12. But I shall not say much about the wars of the ancient Britons, or their mode of fighting; as there are many things far more pleasant to read of, and more useful to know.

13. At that time, which is about one thousand nine hundred years ago, the country was almost covered with forests; and when the people wanted to build a town, they cleared a space for it by cutting down the trees, and then built a number of round huts of branches and clay, with high pointed roofs, like an extinguisher, covered with rushes or reeds.

14. This was called a town; and around it they made a bank of earth, and a fence of the trees they had felled; outside the fence, they also dug a ditch, to protect themselves and their cattle from the sudden attacks of hostile tribes.

15. As to furniture, a few stools or blocks of wood to sit upon, some wooden bowls and wicker baskets to hold their food, with a few jars and pans of coarse earthenware, were all the things they used; for they slept on the ground on skins, spread upon dried leaves, and fern, or heath. Their bows and arrows, shields, spears,

and other weapons, were hung round the insides of their huts.

16. The Britons were not quite ignorant of the art of working in metals; for there was a class of men living among them who understood many useful arts, and were learned, too, for those times, although they did not communicate their learning to the rest of the people.

17. These men were the Druids, or priests, who had much more authority than the chiefs, because they were so much cleverer; therefore the people minded what they said.

18. They made all the laws, and held courts of justice in the open air, when they must have made a very venerable appearance, seated in a circle on stones, dressed in long white woollen robes, with wands in their hands, and long beards descending below their girdles.

19. The ignorant people believed they were magicians, for they knew something of astronomy, and of the medicinal qualities of plants and herbs, with which they made medicines to give the sick, who always thought they were cured by magic.

20. Some of the Druids were bards, that is poets, and musicians; others taught young men to become Druids; and some of them made a

great many useful things out of the metals that were found in the mines.

21. You will perhaps wonder where the Druids gained all their knowledge. I cannot tell you ; but many learned men think that the first Druids came from India or Persia, as the religion they taught was very similar to that of the Persians and Hindoos.

22. They did not believe in the true God, but told the people there were many gods, and that they were in trees and rivers, and fire, which they worshipped for that reason.

23. They had no churches, but made temples, by forming circles of large stones, of such immense size that nobody can guess how they were carried to the places where they stood, for there are some of them still remaining.

24. They used to hold several religious festivals in the course of the year, when all the people made holiday, and the bards played on their harps and sang, and there was plenty of feasting, and merry making; and they used to light bonfires, and make an illumination by running about with torches in their hands, for they believed that a display of fire was pleasing to their gods; and so you see that our custom of having fireworks, and illuminations, and bonfires, on days of public rejoicing, is as old as the time of the ancient Britons.

25. The Druids had a great deal to do on those days ; for they used to go to their temples and say prayers, and sacrifice animals for offerings to their false gods ; and on New Year's Day, they walked in procession to some old oak tree to cut the mistletoe that grew upon it, for this was one of their religious ceremonies ; and the oldest Druid went up into the tree to cut the plant, while the rest stood below singing sacred songs, and holding their robes to catch the boughs as they fell ; and crowds of men and women stood round to see them.

26. But I must make an end of this chapter about the ancient Britons, and tell you how the Romans came and conquered the country, and made quite a different place of it.

QUESTIONS.

3. What was England called in ancient times ?
4. How did the Britons resemble the American Indians ?
5. Describe the tribes that were most civilized ?
7. With whom did they trade, and in what commodities ?
8. How and where was their trade carried on ?
10. For what manufacture were the Britons famous ?
13. How did they build a town ?
15. Describe the furniture of their habitations.
17. Who were the Druids ?
18. Tell me what you know about them.
19. Mention the different employments of the Druids.
21. Where is it supposed the first Druids came from ?
25. Describe their temples.

CHAPTER II.

THE ROMANS IN BRITAIN.



LANDING OF JULIUS CÆSAR.

1. THE Romans, about the time of the birth of Christ, were the richest, the most powerful, and the cleverest people in the world. Rome was a grand city, and there were many other fine cities in Italy belonging to the Romans, who knew how to build handsome houses, and make beautiful gardens, besides being excellent farmers.

2. They had elegant furniture, and pictures, and marble statues; and they were well edu-

cated, and wrote a great number of books in Latin, for that was their language, and many of those books are used in our schools to this day.

3. They had large armies, and had conquered a great many countries, when Julius Cæsar, a great Roman General, brought an army to Britain, about fifty years before the birth of our Saviour, to try to conquer the Britons also; but thousands of British warriors went down to the sea shore, by Dover cliffs, to fight the Romans as soon as they landed; and they took a great many war chariots with them, and fought so bravely, that after two or three battles, Cæsar offered to make peace with them, and go away, if their princes would pay tribute to the Roman government; which they consented to do.

4. However, the Romans thought no more about Britain for nearly a hundred years, when they came again, and went to war in earnest with the natives, who at length were obliged to submit to them; and Britain became a part of the Roman Empire, just as India is at this time a part of the British Empire.

5. Now this was a good thing for the Britons, although they did not then think so; for as soon as they left off fighting, the Romans began to teach them all they knew, and to make a much

better place of Britain than it had ever been before.

6. As soon as a part of the country was conquered, some great man was sent from Rome to govern it, and to make the people obey the Roman laws.

7. Then other great men came to live here, and brought their families and furniture and plate from Rome; and built fine houses, and planted gardens, with flowers and fruit trees, and vegetables, that were never seen here before, for they brought the roots and seeds and young trees with them.

8. At first, the Roman governors made the Britons pay very heavy taxes; not in money, for they had none; but they were obliged to give a part of their cattle, and corn, and metals, or any thing else they had; and to work with the Roman soldiers at building, making roads, draining the watery lands, and cutting down trees, to make room for houses and gardens.

9. They did not like this, and one of the tribes, named the Iceni, who lived in that part of Britain which is now called Norfolk and Suffolk, determined to make another effort to drive the Romans out of the country.

10. You will be surprised to hear that they were headed by a woman; but there were queens

among the Britons as well as kings; and the king of the Iceni being dead, his widow Boadicea governed in his stead.

11. She encouraged her people to rebel against their new rulers, and led them to battle herself, mounted in a chariot, and armed like a warrior; but the Romans won the battle, and the brave but unfortunate queen put an end to her own life.

12. After this, there was another long war, which lasted till all the South British tribes were subdued, and the Roman government established all over the country, except the north part of Scotland.

13. It was lucky for the Britons that a very good Roman, named Agricola, was made governor about this time, for he behaved so kindly that they began to like the Romans, and to wish to live as they did, and to know how to do all the clever things they could do.

14. I should tell you that all the Roman soldiers were educated as engineers and builders, surveyors, and cultivators of land, and when not actually engaged in fighting, they were employed daily for four hours in some such out-of-door labour or occupation; so, when the war was over, they were set to work to improve the country, and the Britons had to help them.

15. They made good hard broad roads, paved with stones firmly cemented together, and set up mile stones upon them.

16. The Romans had built London during the war, and given it the name of Augusta, but the houses were almost all barracks for the soldiers and their families, so that it was not nearly so handsome as York and Bath, and many other cities that they built in place of the old British towns.

17. The Britons, who had never seen any thing better than their own clay huts, must have been quite astonished at the fine houses constructed by the Romans; who also built, in every city, temples, theatres, and public baths, with large rooms for people to meet in, like a coffee house.

18. Then, in each town, was a market place for people to buy and sell goods, and the Romans taught the Britons generally to use money, which was more convenient than taking things in exchange.

19. The Romans were excellent farmers, as I said before; so they shewed the natives how to manage their land better than they had done, and how to make many useful implements of husbandry.

20. By cutting down the forest trees, which

they used in building, they obtained more land for cultivation, and grew so much corn that there was more than enough for the people in Britain, so that a great deal was sent every year to the Roman colonies in Germany.

21. By degrees, the Britons left off their old habits, and those above the lowest rank wore the Roman dress, spoke the Roman language, and adopted the manners and customs of their conquerors, who treated them as friends and equals.

22. There were schools opened in all the towns, where British and Roman boys were instructed together, and the former were all brought up to serve in the Roman armies; for there were no more wars among the British princes; who held the same rank as before, but paid tribute to the Roman governor, and were under his authority, as many of the princes of India are now under the authority of the English Governor General in India.

23. The Britons had to pay a great many taxes, but they likewise enjoyed many rights, for the Roman laws were much better laws than those of the Druids, which were made for barbarians, and not for civilized people, such as the Britons had now become.

24. You will, perhaps, wonder what the

Druids were about all this time. The Romans did not approve of their religion, so they put an end to it very soon, after they came here; but what became of the Druids, is not exactly known.

25. It is supposed that many of them were killed by the Romans in the isle of Anglesea, where the chief Druid always resided; and that all the rest fled to Scotland, or the Isle of Man.

26. The Romans, however, were themselves heathens, when they first settled in Britain, and worshipped a number of false gods; but their gods were different from those of the Druids, and the rites and ceremonies of their religion were different too.

27. But, in course of time, many of the Romans became Christians, and Christianity was taught in Britain, where the heathen temples were converted into Christian churches, and the Britons, as well as the Romans, at length learned to worship the one true God.

28. The Romans had kept possession of Britain for more than three hundred years, when it happened that great armies of barbarians went to fight against Rome, and all the soldiers were sent for, to try to drive them away again; so that this country was left unprotected, for it

was the Roman soldiers who had kept enemies from coming here.

29. The Britons hoped they would come back again, as they did more than once; but affairs got worse and worse at Rome, so the rulers there sent word to the British princes, that they did not wish to keep the island any longer, therefore the Britons might consider themselves a free people. But was freedom a blessing to them? I think we shall find it was not.

QUESTIONS.

3. By whom was Britain first invaded?
4. When did the Romans again appear?
5. Was this conquest a good or bad thing for the Britons, and why?
8. What occasioned the revolt of the Iceni?
10. Who headed the insurrection, and what were its consequences?
13. Who was Agricola?
14. How were the Roman soldiers employed in time of peace?
15. Tell me of the improvements made in Britain by the Romans?
25. What became of the Druids?
28. When and why did the Romans leave Britain?

CHAPTER III.

THE SAXON HEPTARCHY.



A SAXON SHIP.

1. It is now time to tell you something about the Picts and Scots. They were the people of Scotland, and were called by the Romans Caledonians, which meant men of the woods, because they were very rude and fierce, and lived among woods and wilds.

2. They had always been sad enemies to the Britons; but the Romans had kept them away, and the good governor Agricola built a row of

strong forts, all across their country, and placed soldiers in them, to make the Caledonians keep on the other side.

3. However, they sometimes managed to break through; so the Emperor Severus, who was here from the year 207 to 211, had a stone wall built across that narrow part, where Northumberland joins Cumberland, and it was so strong, that parts of the banks and forts are still remaining.

4. But when all the Roman soldiers were gone, the Picts and Scots began to come again, and robbed the people of their corn and cattle, and stole their children for slaves, and did a great deal of mischief.

5. Now, if the British princes had agreed among themselves, and joined together to drive out these terrible foes, things might have gone on very well; but they were foolish enough to quarrel, and go to war with one another; while some of the captains, who wanted to be princes, got a number of soldiers to help them, and took possession of different places, where they called themselves kings, and made the people obey them.

6. They did not continue the good Roman laws; nor elect magistrates to keep order in the cities, as used to be done while the Romans were here; and tillage was neglected, because the

farmers were afraid their crops would be destroyed, so that numbers of people died of famine.

7. There were still many Romans in Britain, who were not soldiers but were settled here, most of them having married into British families; and there were a great number of people who were Britons by birth, but whose ancestors had been Romans; and all these were desirous that the country should still be governed by the Roman laws, and formed what was called the Roman party.

8. But there was a British party also, that wanted to do away with the Roman laws altogether, and not to let the Romans have any thing to do with ruling the country; so each of these parties elected a king.

9. The Britons chose a prince named Vortigern; and the Romans chose one called Aurelius Ambrosius; and there was war between them.

10. Then Vortigern, the British king, thought it would be a good thing to get some other brave people to join his party, that he might be able to overcome his rival, as well as to drive away the Picts and Scots; so he proposed to some of the British chiefs that they should ask the

Saxons to come and help them, and they thought it would be a good plan.

11. The Saxons inhabited the north of Germany, and parts of Holland and Denmark, which were then poor and barren countries.

12. Many of their chiefs were pirates, that is, they lived by going out on the seas to fight and plunder; nor did they think it wicked so to do; but, on the contrary, imagined it was brave and noble.

13. Two of them, Hengist and Horsa, happened to be cruising near the British coast, when they received a message from Vortigern; who made a bargain with them, and offered to give them the little island of Thanet, if they would come with all their men, to assist him in driving out the Picts and Scots.

14. Thanet is that part of Kent where Margate is now situated, but was then separated by an arm of the sea, so that it was a small island, standing alone, nearly a mile from the coast.

15. The Saxons were very ready to come, for they knew that Britain was a pleasant, fertile country, and hoped to get some of it for themselves; but they did not let the Britons know they thought of doing so.

16. Hengist and Horsa were very brave, and their men were well armed, so they soon forced

the Picts and Scots to retreat to their own country; and shortly afterwards they went to the Isle of Thanet, which they fortified, and many more Saxons came there to them.

17. I cannot tell you how the affairs of the Britons went on, or what became of Vortigern; but this I can tell you, that the Saxons soon began to quarrel with the people of Kent, and fought with them, and having driven most of them away, took the land for themselves, and began to live there.

18. The chief who made this conquest, was Esca, the son of Hengist, who called himself king of Kent, which, from that time, was a small Saxon kingdom, for the Britons never won it back again.

13. Then other chiefs, hearing how Esca had succeeded, got together bands of soldiers, and landed in different parts of the country, to try to gain kingdoms also; but they did not all come at once, and their conquests were made by such slow degrees, that the wars lasted more than one hundred and fifty years; so you may guess how hard the Britons fought in defence of their liberty.

20. We can learn but very little about those unhappy times, for the few histories that were

then written were mostly destroyed in these long wars; and though songs were composed by the bards or poets, which the people used to learn and teach to their children, these songs were not all true.

21. They were mostly about the wars, and the brave British chiefs who defended the country against the Saxons; and if you should ever hear any body speak of King Arthur, and the knights of the Round Table, you may remember that he is said to have been one of those chiefs; and, if we may believe the tale, killed four hundred Saxons with his own hand in one battle.

22. Those who made the story about him, say that the nobles of his court were all so equal in bravery and goodness, that he had a large round table made for them to feast at, that no one might sit above another; so they were called knights of the Round Table. But let us return to our history.

23. The Saxons went on making one conquest after another, till, at last, they were in possession of the whole country; where very few of the natives were left, for most of those who had not been killed in the wars, had fled into Gaul, or taken refuge among the Welsh mountains; so from this time we shall hear no more of the

Britons, but must look upon the Saxons as the people of England.

24. I told you how Esca had established the little kingdom of Kent. Well, in the course of the wars, six more kingdoms had been formed in the same manner, by different Saxon chiefs, so that, by the time the conquest was completed, there were seven kingdoms in Britain, namely, Kent, Sussex, Essex, and East Anglia, Northumbria, Wessex, and Mercia; and this division of the country among seven kings, was called the Saxon Heptarchy.

25. The Saxons were not clever people, like the Romans, but were rough and ignorant, and cared for nothing but fighting; so while the wars were going on, they ruined and destroyed all the beautiful and useful works that had been done in the Roman times; for they did not understand their value, and only thought it was a fine thing to destroy all that belonged to their enemies.

26. But the works of the Romans were very strong; for even now, when workmen are digging in London, and different parts of the country, they sometimes find Roman walls, and pavements, and foundations of houses, that show what good architects the Romans were.

27. When the Saxons had got possession of the whole country, you may perhaps suppose

they would be quiet and contented, but this was not the case; for as long as there were separate kingdoms, they were continually at war with each other, and the principal cause of disagreement was, that, among the kings, there was always one called the Bretwalda, or ruler of Britain, who had some degree of authority over the rest; but as any one of them might be raised to this dignity, it was a constant source of quarrels and warfare, until, at length, the weaker kingdoms were overcome by the more powerful ones, and there was but one king over the whole country, which then took the name of Angleland or England, from a particular tribe of people called the Angles, who came here in great numbers with the Saxons.

28. I dare say you did not know before how Britain came to be called England; and you would be very much amused to hear how many of the places in it, came by their present names.

29. We will take for example Norfolk and Suffolk, which, with Cambridge, formed the kingdom of East Anglia, and was conquered by the Angles. Now these Angles consisted of two tribes, who divided their conquest between them, one tribe settling in the north part, the other in the south; so that they were called North folk,

and South folk, and thus came the names of the two counties.

QUESTIONS.

1. Who were the Caledonians?
4. How did they molest the Britons?
6. What was the state of the country at this time?
7. What was the Roman party?
8. What was the British party?
10. Who was Vortigern, and what did he do?
11. Tell me something about the Saxons.
16. Who were Hengist and Horsa, and how did they assist the Britons?
23. What did the Saxons do after this?
24. What was the Heptarchy?
25. How was the country changed by the wars?
27. How was the Heptarchy destroyed?

CHAPTER IV.

MANNERS OF THE SAXONS.



ANCIENT SAXONS.

1. I AM now going to tell you what sort of people the Saxons were, and how they lived after they were quite settled in England; for you ought to know all about them, as they were our own ancestors, and made a great many of

our laws; and their language was English too, although it has so much altered that you would hardly know it for the same.

2. The Saxons were not Christians when they first came here; but their religion was different from that of both the Druids and heathen Romans; for they worshipped great images of stone or wood, that they made themselves, and called gods; and from the names of their gods and goddesses, our names of the days of the week are derived.

3. At length, the bishop of Rome, who was called the Pope; sent some good men to persuade the Saxons to leave off praying to wooden idols, and to worship the true God.

4. These missionaries first went to Ethelbert, king of Kent, who was then Bretwalda, and reasoned with him, so that he saw how wrong he had been, and not only became a Christian himself, but let the missionaries go and preach among the people, who were baptized in great numbers, and taught to believe in God and Jesus Christ.

5. The missionaries were all priests or monks; and some of them lived together in great houses called monasteries, which they built upon lands given them by the kings and nobles, on which they also raised corn, and fed sheep and cattle.

6. They had brought from Rome the knowledge of many useful arts, which they taught to the people, who thus learned to be smiths and carpenters, and to make a variety of things out of metal, wood and leather, which the Saxons did not know how to make before.

7. Then the priests could read and write, which was more than the nobles, or even the kings could do; and they used to write books, and ornament the pages with beautiful borders, and miniature paintings; and the books, thus adorned, are called illuminated manuscripts.

8. Still the Saxons, or English, as I shall henceforth call them, were very rough and ignorant as compared with the Romans.

9. Their churches and houses, and even the palaces of the kings, were rude wooden buildings, and the cottages of the poor people were no better than the huts of the ancient Britons.

10. The common people were almost all employed in cultivating the land, and lived in villages on the different estates to which they belonged; for the Saxon landlords were not only the owners of the land, but of the people also; who were not at liberty, as they are now, to go where they pleased; neither could they buy land for themselves, nor have any property but

what their lords chose. I will tell you how it was.

11. The Saxon lords had divided all the land amongst themselves, and had brought from their own countries thousands of ceorls, or poor people, dependent on them, to be their labourers.

12. Each family of ceorls was allowed to have a cottage, with a few acres of land, and to let their cattle or sheep graze on the commons, for which, instead of paying rent, they worked a certain number of days in each year for their lord, and, besides, gave him a stated portion of those things their little farms produced; so that whenever they killed a pig, they carried some of it to the great house; and the same with their fowls, eggs, honey, milk and butter; and thus the chief's family was well supplied with provisions by his tenants, some of whom took care of his sheep and herds, cultivated his fields, and got in his harvests.

13. Then there were always some among them who had learned useful trades, and thus they did all the kinds of work their masters wanted.

14. Yet, with all this, the poor ceorls generally had enough for themselves, and some to spare, which they sold at the markets, and thus were able to save a little money.

15. Their cottages were round huts, made of the rough branches of trees, coated with clay, and thatched with straw. They had neither windows nor chimneys; but a hole was made in the roof to let out the smoke from the wood fire, kindled on a hearth in the middle of the room; and they used to bake their barley-cakes, which served them for bread, on these hearths, without any oven.

16. They made a coarse kind of cloth for clothing from the wool of their sheep, a part of which was also given to their lord, and was used to clothe the servants of his household, for the rich people got a finer cloth for themselves, which was brought from other countries.

17. Great men usually wore white cloth tunics that reached to the knee, with broad coloured borders, and belts round the waist. They had short cloaks, linen drawers and black leather shoes, with coloured bands crossed on their legs, instead of stockings. The common people wore tunics of coarse dark cloth, and shoes, but no covering on the legs.

18. But I must tell you something more about these country folks, who, at the time, formed the great mass of the English population. They were, strictly speaking, in bondage, for they could not leave the place where they were born,

nor the master they belonged to, unless he gave them their freedom; they were obliged to serve as soldiers in war time, and when the land was transferred to a new lord, the people were transferred with it.

19. All they had might at any time be taken from them, and their sons and daughters could not marry, without consent of their lord.

20. Yet these people considered themselves free, because they could not be sold like the slaves; for I ought to tell you there was a lower class of bondmen, called thralls, and there were regular slave markets where they were bought and sold.

✕ 21. A landowner could sell a thrall just as he could sell an ox; but he could not sell a vassal tenant, or, as they were called in the Saxon times, a ceorl, or churl, without the estate to which he belonged. The thralls were employed to do the hardest and meanest work, and had nothing of their own.

22. The houses of the great men were very like large barns, and each house stood on an open space of ground, enclosed by a wall of earth and a ditch, within which there were stacks of corn, sheds for the horses and cattle, and huts for the thralls to sleep in.

23. The principal room was a great hall,

strewed with rushes, and furnished with long oak tables and benches.

24. The windows were square holes crossed with thin laths, called lattices, and the fire-place was a stone hearth in the middle of the earthen floor, on which they used to burn great logs of wood, and let the smoke go out at a hole in the door.

25. But the great people often had merry doings in these halls, for they were fond of feasting, and used to sit at the long wooden tables, without table cloths, and eat out of wooden platters or trenchers with their fingers.

26. Boiled meats and fish, usually salted, were put on the table in great wooden dishes, but roast meats were brought in on the spits on which they were cooked, and handed round by the thralls, to the company, who helped themselves with knives which they carried at their girdles.

27. There was plenty of ale, and among the richest, wine also, which they drank out of horn cups; and when the meats were taken away, they used to drink and sing, and play on the harp, and often had tumblers, jugglers, and minstrels to amuse them.

28. Then the visitors used to lie down on the floor to sleep, covered with their cloaks; for

very few people had bedsteads, and the only beds were a kind of large bags, or bed-ticks, filled with straw, and blocks of wood for pillows.

29. Such were the rough manners of our Saxon forefathers, who were, however, in some respects a good sort of people, and you will be sorry for them by and by, when you read how the Normans came, and took away their lands, and made slaves of them. But I must first tell you what happened in the Saxon times, after the Heptarchy was broken up, and there was only one king of England.

QUESTIONS.

4. How were the Saxons converted to Christianity?
6. By what means did they learn many useful arts?
8. What was the condition of the common people?
15. Describe the cottages of the poor.
16. How did the Saxons dress?
21. What were ceorls? and what were thralls?
22. Describe the house of a Saxon chief.

CHAPTER V.

THE DANES AND ALFRED THE GREAT.



ALFRED THE GREAT.

1. It was nearly 380 years after the first Saxons came here with their two pirate chiefs, Hengist and Horsa, that England began to have only one king.

2. There were still some other princes, who bore that title, but they had so little power, that

they could hardly be called kings; so that a brave prince, named Egbert, who conquered the last kingdom of the Heptarchy, is usually called the first king of England.

3. The civil wars were thus, for a time, ended; but it seemed as if the English were never to be long at peace, for they now had some terrible enemies to contend with, who kept the country in constant alarm.

4. These were the Danes who came from Denmark, Norway, and Sweden, and were almost the same people as the Saxons; for they spoke the same language, followed the same customs, and lived by piracy, as the Saxons did in former times.

5. I have not room to tell you of half the mischief they did in England. Sometimes they would land suddenly from their boats in the night, when the affrighted people were awakened by a cry of, "the Danes! the Danes!" and, starting up, perhaps, beheld their villages in flames; and, as they ran in terror from their cottages, were either killed or dragged away to the pirate vessels, with the cattle and any thing else that could be found, and made slaves.

6. Egbert had fought a battle with them in Cornwall, and forced them to depart; but, during the reign of Ethelwulf, the next king, and three

of his sons, they not only attacked the towns and villages on the sea-coast, but used to seize the horses and ride about the country in search of plunder.

7. They broke into the monasteries, where the people often put their money and jewels for safety ; and if the inmates made any resistance they would set the building on fire.

8. Then they set up fortified camps, in many places ; that is, a number of tents, arranged together, like a town surrounded with a wall and ditch ; and thus a great many of the Danes established themselves in the country, and conquered all the northern part of it. This was the sad state of affairs when Alfred the Great came to the throne.

9. I dare say you have heard of this good prince, who was the youngest and favorite son of king Ethelwulf, for he was the cleverest and best. His mother, being an accomplished lady, tried to teach all her sons to read ; but none of them would learn except Alfred, who afterwards went to Rome to study Latin, and learn to write, so that he was a good scholar for those times.

10. His three brothers had all reigned in turn, and were all dead by the time he was twenty-two years old, therefore he was then heir to the crown ; but, instead of being able to think

about the best way of governing the country, he was obliged to get together as many soldiers as he could, and go out with them to fight the Danes.

11. There was no regular army then, as there is now ; but, when the king wanted soldiers, he sent to all the noblemen and landholders in the kingdom, who were obliged to come themselves and bring so many men with them, according to the size of their estates, some on horseback, some on foot, and all well armed.

12. You must remember that people could not buy land then for money, nor have it for paying rent ; but large estates were given to the thanes and nobles by the king, on condition that they should perform certain services for him ; and you have already seen how the vassals of the nobles held their little farms on similar terms.

13. This was called the feudal system, which means, holding land for services instead of rent ; and the person holding the land was called the vassal of him to whom it belonged, whether rich or poor ; so the nobles were the vassals of the king, and the ceorls were the vassals of the nobles.

14. I think you now understand what the feudal system was, therefore I shall proceed with the history of Alfred the Great.

15. The war had gone on for several years,

and the king was so unfortunate that, at last, he was obliged to hide himself in a woody marsh in Somersetshire, called the Isle of Athelney, because it was surrounded by bogs and rivers.

16. The Danes were then in pursuit of him; and, one time, fearing to be taken prisoner, he got some man to let him keep his cows, or pigs, I do not know which; so that, if the Danes happened to see him, they might not guess who he was.

17. I dare say, you have heard the story of this peasant's wife scolding Alfred one day, for letting some cakes burn, which she had left to bake on the hearth, whilst she was out; but she did not know that he was the king, or, of course, she would not have taken that liberty.

18. At last, Alfred heard there were many chiefs and noblemen, with their vassals, ready to join him again; so he determined to try another battle, but thought it would be prudent first to learn what was the real strength of the enemy.

19. Now the Danes, like the Saxons, were fond of good cheer, and liked to have songs and music to make them merry while they were feasting; and this put it into Alfred's head to go into their camp disguised as a harper, for he could play the harp and sing very well.

20. So away he went, with his harp at his back, and, when he came there, the Danish chiefs had him called into their tents, and made him sit down and play to them, and gave him plenty to eat and drink.

21. Then he heard them talking about king Alfred, and saying, they supposed he was dead, as he did not come to fight them, so they need think of nothing but enjoying themselves; and thus he discovered they were not prepared for a battle, and were almost sure to be defeated, if taken by surprise.

22. He, therefore, left the camp as soon as he could, and sent a message to his friends to meet him in Selwood Forest, also in Somersetshire, with all the men they could muster; and, when they were all come, he put himself at their head, and, marching suddenly down upon the Danes, fought and won a great battle at Ethandune, a place in Gloucestershire, now called Woeful Danes' Bottom, from the terrible slaughter of the Danes there.

23. But there were a great many Danes in England who had not been engaged in this battle, and who had possession of almost all the northern part of the country; so the king wisely considered that it would be much better to induce them to settle peaceably in the country as

friends, rather than prolong those dreadful wars, which had already caused so much misery.

24. He therefore proposed to the Danish chief that, if he would promise to keep at peace, he should have a wide tract of country, which had been desolated by these wars, all along the east coast, from the river Tweed to the river Thames, for himself and his people, to be called the Dane land; so Guthrun, the Danish chief, accepted the offer, and parcelled the land out amongst his followers, who settled there with their vassals, and lived the same manner as the Saxons.

25. You may think how glad the people were that the wars were over, and the king was very glad too, for he now had time to do what was more pleasant to him than fighting, which was, to do all the good he could for the country. He thought the best way to defend it against its enemies was to have good ships to keep them from landing; but, as the English did not know much about ship-building, he sent for men from Italy to teach them, and also had models of ships brought that they might see how they were constructed, and men were taught to manage them, so that England, for the first time, had a navy.

26. These ships were called galleys, and were

worked both with oars and sails ; they were twice as long as those of the Danes, and stood higher out of the water.

27. While some workmen were making ships, others were employed in rebuilding of the towns and villages that had been burned down by the Danes ; and the king ordained that there should be schools in different parts of the kingdom, where noblemen's sons might be educated, for he had found the benefit of learning himself, and thought it a sad thing that all the great men should be so ignorant as they were.

28. You may, perhaps, wonder why so good a man as Alfred should only think of having the great people taught to read ; but reading would have been of no use to the common people, as the art of printing was unknown, and there were no books but those written by the monks or nuns, which were so expensive that none but very rich people could afford to have even two or three of them.

29. The principal school founded by king Alfred was at Oxford, which was then a small, poor place, with a monastery, and a few mean wooden houses for the scholars to live in, very different from the present grand university, and the masters, who were all churchmen, and called learned clerks, resided in the monastery.

30. Alfred, with the help of some good and

clever men, whom he consulted in every thing, made some very wise laws, and obliged the people to obey them, by having courts of justice held in the principal cities, regularly once a month; for no body had thought much about law or justice either, while the wars were going on, so that there was need of some very strict regulations to restore good order, without which there can be neither happiness nor comfort any where.

31. Under the good government of Alfred the Great, England enjoyed more peace and prosperity than it had known since the days of the Romans; and as his son and grandson both endeavoured to follow his example, the influence of his wisdom was felt long after his death, which happened when he was about fifty years old, in the year 900.

QUESTIONS.

2. Who was called the first king of England?
4. Who were the Danes?
8. How did they establish themselves in the country?
10. Who went to war with them?
11. How was an army raised in those times?
12. What was the feudal system?
15. What happened to Alfred?
22. What was the battle of Ethandune?
24. How did Alfred make friends of the Danes?
26. How was a navy first formed?
29. Which of our universities was founded by Alfred the Great?

CHAPTER VI.

FROM THE DEATH OF ALFRED TO THE NORMAN
CONQUEST.

CANUTE AND HIS COURTIER.

1. ALFRED was succeeded by his son Edward, who was a very good king, though not so clever as his father. He built walls round a great

many of the towns, to defend them in case the Danes should come again; for, although so many of them were living quietly in the country, those who did not live here were still enemies, and the resident Danes were always ready to join their countrymen.

2. But they could not do much mischief while Edward was king, or in the reign of his brave son Athelstan, who was almost as great a prince as Alfred himself.

3. He knew that commerce was one of the best things in the world for any country, so he had more ships built, and sent them to trade with foreign countries; and he said that, when any man had made three voyages in a vessel of his own, he should be made a Thane; which was the same as knighting a gentleman in these days.

4. There were no stores in England at this time, but the people bought every thing they wanted at markets and fairs; and they used to salt a great deal of their meat and fish, that it might keep a long time.

5. In buying and selling, they sometimes used slaves and cattle, instead of money, a man slave being worth a pound of silver, and an ox worth a quarter of a pound, which was called five shillings, as a shilling was the twentieth part of a pound in weight.

6. If a nobleman, therefore, wanted to buy any thing of two pounds value, he could pay for it with two of his thralls, or eight oxen, and the seller was obliged to take them; but he could sell them again directly; for I am sorry to say there were slave markets in England till some time after the Norman Conquest.

7. Athelstan had a good deal of fighting to do, for the people of the Daneland revolted, and he was obliged to lead his soldiers into their territory, to bring them to order; and then he had to march against Howel, the Prince of Wales, who was defeated in battle, when Athelstan nobly gave him back his dominions, saying, "There was more glory in making a king than in dethroning one."

8. I shall not mention all the kings that reigned after Athelstan, because there were many of them who did nothing that is worth telling about; but I must speak of a great churchman, named Dunstan, who was Archbishop of Canterbury, and, for several reigns, ruled the whole country, for the kings and nobles were obliged to do just as he pleased.

9. He was a very clever man, and so good a worker in metals that he made jewellery and bells, and gave them to some of the churches, which was considered an act of piety; for it was

about this time that bells began to be used in England, and they were highly valued.

10. Dunstan persuaded the kings and rich noblemen, to rebuild the monasteries that had been plundered and destroyed by the Danes, and endow them with lands; so that, at last, nearly one-third of all the landed property in the kingdom belonged to the clergy.

11. There was a king named Edgar, the fourth after Athelstan, who did many useful things for the country; and, among others, he thought of a plan to destroy the wolves, which were so numerous in all the forests, that the people were in constant alarm for the safety of their sheep, and even of their little children.

12. Edgar, therefore, ordered that each of the princes of Wales, who had to pay tribute to the kings of England, should send, instead of money, three hundred wolves' heads every year; so they were obliged to employ huntsmen to go into the woods to kill those dangerous animals, which were so generally destroyed in a few years that they have seldom been found in England ever since.

13. Then Edgar kept the Danes away by having as many as three hundred and sixty vessels always ready for service; but, when he and Dunstan were dead the navy was neglected;

and the country was again overrun with those terrible enemies, who fought with the English every where, robbed them of their property, took their houses for themselves, and acted just as if they were the conquerors and lords of the land.

14. At last, the Danish king, Sweyn, landed with a great army, and began a dreadful war with Ethelred, who was then king of England, that lasted about four years, in the course of which he and Ethelred both died; but the war was continued by Canute, the son of Sweyn, and with such success, that, in the end, he was crowned king of England.

15. It was lucky for the English that Canute happened to be a wise and good prince; for he said to himself, "As I am now king of these people, I will behave kindly to them, that they may love me, and then we shall go on comfortably together." So he began to repair the mischief that had been done in the late wars, by setting people to work to rebuild the towns that had been destroyed; which was soon done in those days, when the houses were so roughly built, and only of wood.

16. He also made a law that the Danes should not rob and insult the English, as they had been in the habit of doing; and ordered that they

should obey the other laws of the country; which he did not alter in the least; neither did he interfere with the estates of the nobles, nor with their rights over their vassals; and he consulted with the Witanagemote, or Parliament, in all affairs of importance.

17. This Parliament was composed of the great nobles and the bishops, so that it was like our House of Lords; and, when the king made a new law, the people were not obliged to obey it, until it had been approved by the Witanagemote.

18. As long as Canute reigned, which was nineteen years, there were peace and plenty, and the poor people were much happier than they had been for a long time, for they could stay at home and mind their farms, or work at their trades, without being called away continually to fight the Danes.

19. The king, it is true, kept a large army of Danish soldiers, and the people had to pay heavy taxes to support them; but this was better than seeing them come as enemies into the towns and villages to destroy or take every thing.

20. After the death of Canute, his two sons reigned in succession, but they were neither very

good nor very clever, and both died within six years.

21. All this while there was a Saxon prince, named Edward, son of king Ethelred, living at the court of the Duke of Normandy, who was his uncle, and had afforded him shelter and protection whilst his enemies were ruling in England.

22. He was now restored to the throne, and the English people thought themselves happy in having again a king of their own nation; but they little foresaw the terrible consequences of placing over them one who had formed so close a connection with the Normans.

23. Edward was attached to the Normans, for they had been kind to him in his misfortunes; but it was neither wise nor just to bring a great number of them to his court, and set them up above his own countrymen, by giving them the highest appointments in the government, which, of course, gave offence to the English noblemen.

24. Edward was called the Confessor, because he spent much of his time in devotion. He rebuilt Westminster Abbey, which was founded during the Heptarchy; but this building was pulled down about 160 years afterwards, by Henry the Third, who erected the present edifice in its place.

25. But I was going to tell you what happened in consequence of the king's attachment to the Normans. His uncle was dead, and his cousin William, a bold spirited prince, who was now Duke of Normandy, came over to England to visit the king, and see what sort of a place it was.

26. He brought a great many noblemen with him, and it seems they all liked the country so much that the Duke thought he should like to be its king, and his friends thought they should like to get good estates here; so king Edward was persuaded to make a will, or give his promise, that, when he died, his cousin William, who was more than twenty years younger than himself, should be his successor. The English lords knew nothing about this at the time, but they had reason enough to know it afterwards, as you will presently find.

27. Edward the Confessor died at the beginning of the year 1066, when Harold, his wife's brother, a brave and popular nobleman, took possession of the throne, with the consent of the chief nobles and clergy.

QUESTIONS.

1. Who succeeded Alfred?
2. Who was the next king?

3. How was trade encouraged by him ?
5. Tell me the way of making purchases at this period.
7. Were there any wars in the reign of Athelstan ?
8. Who was Dunstan ?
14. Who was Canute, and how did he obtain the throne ?
16. What were the chief acts of Canute ?
18. How long did Canute reign ?
19. What was the general state of the country under his government ?
20. Who succeeded Canute ?
21. How was the Saxon government restored ?
23. How did the king displease his subjects ?
24. Why was Edward called the Confessor ?
27. When did Edward die, and who succeeded him ?

CHAPTER VII.

THE NORMAN CONQUEST.



DEATH OF HAROLD.

1. As soon as the Duke of Normandy knew that Edward the Confessor was dead, and Harold made king, he called his friends together, and promised to bestow lands and honors in England on all who would assist him to win the crown ; which, he said, was his by right, and that Harold was an usurper.

2. Now this is a doubtful question ; for, although the king could appoint a successor, if he thought proper ; yet it was necessary that his choice should have the approval of the Witenagemote, which had not been given in this case ; so the English said that, notwithstanding king Edward's will, the Duke of Normandy had no right to the throne.

3. I cannot pretend to say which was right ; but, as it is of more consequence to know how the dispute ended, we will proceed to the history of the conquest.

4. The Normans were great warriors ; so that even many of the clergy would sometimes put on armour under their robes, and lead their own vassals to battle ; and they had as much interest in the dispute as the nobles, for they expected to come into possession of some of the Bishops' sees and rich abbey lands, provided Duke William should succeed in his enterprise.

5. While all this was going on in Normandy, Harold's brother, Tosti, had raised a rebellion in the north of England, and was joined by the king of Norway, who landed with an army in Yorkshire : so Harold had to go and fight with them, and there was a great battle at Stamford Bridge, where the king gained a complete victory.

6. Two or three days after this he was enjoying himself at a great feast, at York, when news was brought to him that the Normans had landed in Sussex, where they were doing all manner of mischief, driving the people away from the towns and villages, and taking every thing they could lay their hands on.

7. The king made all the haste he could to get his soldiers together, and began his march to oppose the invaders, but it took nearly a fortnight to get to where they were; and all that time the invaders were making dreadful havoc for miles round their camp, so that the terrified people fled to the woods, or shut themselves up in the churches, for fear of being killed.

8. At last, Harold came, and a battle was fought near Hastings, on the 14th of October, 1066, where the king and two of his brothers, with a great many of the English nobles, were slain, and the conqueror from that day looked upon himself as the master of the country.

9. But the English had seen enough of the Normans to know that they should be very badly treated if they once suffered a Norman government to be established, so they resolved to do their utmost to prevent it, and thus the Normans had to fight for every town, and castle, before it was given up to them.

10. William had marched to London, and laid siege to it, soon after the battle of Hastings, and the people having submitted to him, he was crowned in Westminster Abbey, on Christmas day.

11. A few of the English nobles went to offer their submission, that is, they agreed to obey him as their king, since he had promised that all who did so should be permitted to enjoy their rank and property undisturbed.

12. But it was only a few who trusted to these promises, and they were deceived in the end, for it is almost certain that the Conqueror intended, from the first, to take every thing from the English to give to the Normans.

13. I mean the English lords; for he meant to make the common people remain on the estates to which they belonged, that the new masters might have vassals and slaves to cultivate their lands.

14. Now the poor people did not like this any more than the nobles themselves, so they fought bravely for their masters in many places; but it was all to no purpose; for, at the end of seven years, the Normans were in possession of all the land in the country, and most of its former lords had either been killed, or were reduced to such

a state of poverty and wretchedness that it is melancholy to think of.

15. I will not attempt to describe the sufferings of the people during that long period, but you may imagine how very miserable they must have been, for the Normans got the better of them all over the country, and took delight in robbing and insulting their unhappy victims.

16. I told you that the design of the Conqueror was to take all the land, and divide it among his followers, except what he chose to keep for himself, as crown lands.

17. Now there were many Saxon ladies who possessed estates, in consequence of their fathers or brothers having been killed at the battle of Hastings; and most of these heiresses were compelled, against their will, to marry Norman lords, who thus gained lands as well as brides.

18. Then the estates of all those who had not submitted to the king were declared to be forfeited, and William gave them to the Normans, or, more properly speaking, he gave the Barons leave to take them by force; so the English lords had to fight for their houses and lands, and many were killed, and many fled to other countries.

19. The rustics, on these forfeited estates, would fight for their lord to the last; but, when he was forced to yield, they had no choice but

to submit to the new lord, or to see their cottages set on fire, and their wives and children perhaps murdered before their eyes.

20. Some of the English nobles hid in the forests with their families, and as many of their vassals as would go with them, where they made habitations, and supported themselves by robbery and hunting; and this was the origin of the numerous bands of robbers that, in after times, were the terror of the country.

21. The famous Robin Hood, who lived in the reign of Richard the First, is supposed to have been a descendant of one of these unfortunate English nobles.

22. The Bishops' sees and abbey lands were seized in the same violent manner, as the estates of the nobles, and given to the Norman clergy; and many of the monasteries, after being broken open and plundered, were taken for the abode of monks who came over from Normandy in great numbers.

23. The Normans built a great many castles in different parts of the country; and, if they wanted to build one on a spot where there happened to be houses, they thought nothing of turning out the inhabitants, and pulling down the houses, to make room: and they pressed the poor people, both men and women, to do all the

labour, without pay, and treated them very cruelly besides ; for, if they did not work hard enough, these unfeeling taskmasters would urge them on with blows.

24. Then wherever the Norman soldiers stayed, they went and lived in the houses of the people, took what they pleased, and made the family wait upon them.

25. The king, himself, cruelly laid waste different parts of the country in revenge for the opposition made to his progress by some of the English earls, especially in the north, where, about three years after the battle of Hastings, such a scene of desolation was made by fire and sword, that, from York to Durham, the houses, the people, and all signs of cultivation, were utterly destroyed.

26. The last stand made against the Normans was in a little island, formed by bogs and lakes, in Cambridgeshire, and still called the Isle of Ely. There, a brave chief, named Hereward, set up a fortified camp, and was joined by other noblemen, and many of their dependents, who, with the ceorls, or tenants, belonging to the Abbey of Ely, made quite an army.

27. It was a secure place of refuge, because the only safe paths into the island were unknown to the Normans, who would most likely

have been lost in the bogs, if they had ventured to approach.

28. But they had built a castle close by, at Cam Bridge, and they brought boats and tried to make causeways by which they might get into the camp of refuge; but the English would go out in bands at night and destroy all that their enemies had done, and kept constantly on the watch for straggling parties, who were often attacked unawares, and many of them killed, while the English could always retreat to their camp, where they were safe from pursuit.

29. At last the Normans established a blockade of boats round the island, and provisions began to get scarce within it; so two or three bad selfish men, who lived in the abbey, went to the Normans at Cam Bridge, and said, they would show them the way into the island, if they would promise not to meddle with the abbey.

30. These men led the Normans secretly into the island, and a terrible battle was fought, in which almost all the English were killed.

31. When Hereward saw it was useless to fight any longer, he made his escape, and went to his own castle of Bourn, in Lincolnshire; where I believe, he afterwards made peace with the king, and was allowed to keep his estate.

32. I have given you a long history of the Conquest, because it was the most important event that ever occurred in the history of England, and was the last sudden and violent change made in this country by foreign invasion.

QUESTIONS.

1. Explain the cause of the Norman invasion ?
8. What was the battle of Hastings, and where was it fought ?
9. Did the English make any further resistance ?
14. How long was it before the conquest was completed ?
18. How did many of the Norman lords obtain their estates ?
20. What became of the English nobles ?
23. How were the English treated by the Norman soldiers ?
26. What was the Camp of Refuge, and by whom established ?
31. What became of Hereward ?

CHAPTER VIII.

THE NORMAN PERIOD.—1087 TO 1154.



DEATH OF WILLIAM RUFUS.

1. THE Normans were a cleverer people than the English, and lived in a superior manner. They were better acquainted with the arts of agriculture and architecture, and they knew a great deal more about useful gardening; for all the convents in Normandy had good gardens, planted with vegetables and herbs; and the

monks brought over plenty of seeds and roots to sow or plant in gardens here.

2. The Normans built stone castles, and strong houses of timber, with upper stories, so that their dwellings, in general, were higher and more substantial than those of the Saxons; and one great improvement was that they had chimneys; but their furniture was as rough and clumsy as the furniture used in the Saxon times, and their way of living was almost the same, except that they did not care so much about feasting, but preferred spending their time in hunting, hawking, and fighting in sport, for pastime.

3. I should here tell you that William the Conqueror made the first game laws, and very severe they were, and very hard upon the poor people, who used to be at liberty to kill game in the forests; but, after these new laws, they dared not so much as take even a hare or partridge in their own fields.

4. It was not only the English, who were forbidden to hunt on the royal domains, but the Normans also, unless they had special leave to do so; and, if any one was bold enough to kill a deer in the king's forests, he was punished in the most cruel manner, by having his eyes put out, or his hands cut off.

5. The king's palace was at Winchester, and he wanted to have a forest close by for hunting, so he ordered that all the towns and villages should be pulled down for about thirty miles, and the land planted with trees; and, what was worse, he gave nothing to the poor people for turning them out of their homes; and this is still called the New Forest.

6. In imitation of this bad example, many of the nobles began to make large parks, enclosed with walls to keep deer, and they cared no more than William had done about taking away the fields and pasture lands of the poor cottagers, who dared not complain, and were even obliged to run to their doors with refreshments to offer to the Norman lords and their followers when they were out hunting, although they often saw them riding over their corn, and breaking through their hedges.

7. It was not till after several reigns that the descendants of the Norman Conquerors began to consider themselves Englishmen, and to treat their vassals more like fellow countrymen.

8. The first hundred years after the conquest is therefore usually called the Norman period, and includes the reigns of William the Conqueror, William Rufus, Henry the First, and Stephen.

9. I have already told you that the Feudal system was brought into England by the Saxons, and I explained what it was ; but I must now mention that this system was carried much farther by the Normans, that is, their feudal laws were stricter, and the nobles themselves were bound by them as well as the common people.

10. I should wish you to understand this as clearly as possible, because the manners and customs of the age were governed entirely by those laws.

11. First, then, the king was lord of the land, and kept a great portion of it for himself, which made what were called crown lands ; and all the people, who lived on the crown lands, whether in burgh, town, or country, were his tenants, and paid him rent, or taxes, both in money and produce, besides being obliged to furnish him with soldiers at their own expense.

12. For example, if a town had to find two or more horse-soldiers, the inhabitants were, besides, obliged to pay the expenses of their arms, horses and maintenance, for the time they were on service.

13. The Manors and Abbey lands were held of the king on the same conditions ; and every man, who had a certain quantity of land, was bound

either to serve as a soldier himself, or send a substitute.

14. The rest of the country was divided by the king amongst the great barons, who agreed, in return, that whenever he went to war they would go with him, and take with them so many men, properly armed and trained for warfare, perhaps fifty or a hundred, or even more, according to the extent of lands they held.

15. These great Baronies were called Feods, and the king was the feudal or feodal lord of the barons, who were called crowned vassals; and, when any one of them died, the king took the lands again until the heir paid him a large sum of money to redeem them.

16. Some of the kings behaved very ill in this, in making the heirs pay a great deal more than was just; and, if a baron died, and left a daughter only, she was obliged to marry any one the king chose, or he would not let her have her inheritance at all.

17. The feudal laws were therefore very bad, because they gave men the power of being tyrants to each other; for the nobles had the same power of oppressing their vassals that the king had of oppressing them.

18. You must understand that the great Barons, who held very extensive domains, gave

small estates out of them to men who were not so high in rank as themselves, on the same conditions as the king had given the large baronies to them, so that the lesser nobles were the vassals of the great ones, and were bound to aid them with men and money when required.

19. Then all the nobles, from the highest to the lowest degree, were the absolute lords of all the common people that dwelt on their lands, and could make them do just whatever they pleased, as I told you they could in the Saxon times; but then the Norman lords treated them, at first, a great deal more harshly than the Saxon lords did, and took a great deal more from them.

20. After the Norman conquest they were called villeins, which meant villagers, and they lived in the same manner, and had the same kind of duties to perform for their lords, as in the Saxon times; but there were many new feudal customs brought here by the Normans; as for example, a mill was set up on every estate, to which all the poor people were obliged to take their corn to be ground, instead of grinding it at home with hand-mills, as they used to do; and, out of each measure, a part was taken for the baron, which was a very hard tax upon them, especially if they had large families.

21. Another feudal custom was this; a duty was laid on every thing sold at the fairs and markets; that is, if a man went to the market to buy a sheep, he must pay so much for the sheep, and so much for duty, the duty being for the baron, or lord of the manor.

22. There were a great many other customs which I have not room to mention, but I think I have said enough to show you what the feudal system was in the first ages after the Norman conquest; so now I will tell you something about the first Norman sovereigns.

23. William the Conqueror died in 1087, and was succeeded by his eldest son, Robert, in Normandy, and by his second son, William Rufus, in England; but after a time Duke Robert wanted money to go to the Holy Wars, which I will tell you about presently, so he mortgaged his duchy of Normandy to his brother William, who thus became sovereign of both countries, as his father had been. He was a sad tyrant, and so rude in his manners that nobody liked him.

24. I told you what strict game laws were made by the Conqueror, but William Rufus made them more severe still, and so displeased the noblemen, by forbidding them to hunt without his leave, that some of them formed a conspiracy to

dethrone him ; but the plot was discovered, and the Earl of Northumberland, who was at the head of it, was taken prisoner, and confined in Windsor Castle all the rest of his life.

25. There was another great lord, the Count d'Eu, who was accused of being engaged in this plot, by a knight called Geoffrey Bainard, so the king had him arrested. The Count, however, denied having any thing to do with it, and said he defied his accuser, and was ready to fight with him, and that God would give the victory to whichever of them was in the right.

26. So they fought with swords, in the presence of the king and court, when Bainard was victorious, and the Count being thus convicted, was condemned to have his eyes torn out.

27. This was a strange way for a man to prove his innocence of any crime, but it became a common custom in England, and was called "Wager of battle." Even law-suits, respecting right of property, were often thus decided ; and, if a lady had a quarrel or a lawsuit, she might get a man to do battle for her, and he was called her champion.

28. It was the fashion for many ages, not only in England, but all over Europe, for young men of noble birth to roam about the world in search of adventures ; and, as they were gene-

rally poor and depended chiefly on their swords for subsistence, they would engage in any body's quarrels; fight in the cause of women or children who were either injured or oppressed, and enlist in the service of princes and barons who were at war.

29. This was called chivalry, and these knights errant, or wandering knights, were made welcome wherever they went, and treated with hospitality at the castles of the great.

30. Numbers of them went to the Holy Wars, but, as I suppose you do not know what the Holy Wars were, I will tell you about them.

31. Many pious Christians in those days thought it a duty to make a journey, or pilgrimage as it was called, to Jerusalem, once in their lives, to say their prayers at our Saviour's tomb; but Jerusalem had been conquered by the Mahomedans, who hated the Christians, and behaved very cruelly to the pilgrims; so the Pope, who you know is the great Bishop of Rome, and at that time had more authority over all the countries of Europe than the kings had, said that it was the duty of all Christian warriors to go to Palestine, or the Holy Land, to fight against the Saracens, and try to drive them from Jerusalem.

32. Then a religious man, called Peter the

Hermit, went about preaching a crusade, that is, exhorting the princes and nobles in France, Germany, and Italy, to undertake this war, which was called a crusade, or *croisade*, because the ensign on their banners was to be the Cross.

33. Robert, Duke of Normandy, was among the first crusaders, and, as he wanted money to keep himself and all the fighting men he took with him, he pledged his duchy to his brother, William Rufus, for a very large sum.

34. The English did not join in these wars, at first, but after a time there was scarcely a knight or noble in the land that did not go to the Crusades, for they were continued, in all, more than two hundred years; and, during two hundred years; and, during that time, great numbers of the lower order of people in England were freed from bondage, in consequence of being allowed to purchase their liberty to supply their lords with money for these wars.

35. William Rufus, who was killed by accident as he was hunting in the New Forest, was succeeded by his brother, Henry the First, surnamed Beauclerk, because he was a learned man, who behaved much better to the Saxon English than the two former kings had done, and restored to some of the old families a part of their ancient possessions.

36. He likewise altered the forest laws, which had given so much discontent, and gave the citizens of London leave to hunt in Epping Forest, which then reached very nearly to the walls of the city.

37. Winchester was then the capital of England, but London was one of the best cities and the richest, as many of its inhabitants were merchants who traded with foreign countries; yet the houses were only mean wooden buildings, with no glass in the windows, and thatched with straw.

38. Westminster was quite a separate city, and divided from London by country houses, fields and a village. The king had a palace at Westminster, and William Rufus built Westminster hall adjoining it, for his Christmas feasts.

39. A curious privilege was granted by Henry the First to the citizens of London, which will serve to show you what grievances the people were subject to in those times.

40. There were a great number of persons who were employed in various ways about the court, and who followed the king wherever he went; for great men, when they travelled, were obliged to take every thing they wanted with them, there being no public accommodation to be had any where; so they carried with them

waggon loads of furniture, plate, wine, cooking utensils, and I do not know what besides ; with their domestics and retainers of all descriptions, who formed a numerous retinue.

41. Now, the inhabitants of any city, where the king happened to be holding his court, were obliged to give board and lodging, at free cost, to all these people, who generally behaved very ill ; for they would insist upon having the best rooms, order whatever they chose, and treat the family just as if they were their servants.

42. It was, therefore, a very good thing for the Londoners when king Henry released them from this heavy burthen, but all other towns had to bear it for a very long period.

43. In this reign the first manufactory for woollen cloth was established in this country, by some weavers from Flanders, where the best cloth was made from English wool, which was the staple commodity of England at that period ; I mean, the thing of which they had most to sell ; for quantities of sheep were reared on every estate.

44. England had no manufactures then, so there were no employments for the lower classes but agriculture, and the few useful arts, that were but very imperfectly understood.

45. Henry the First died in the year 1135.

He left the crown to his daughter Matilda, who had been twice married; first, to the Emperor of Germany, and again to Geoffrey Plantagenet, Earl of Anjou, who was dead also, therefore she was again a widow.

46. But there was a nephew of the late king, named Stephen, who was rather a favorite among the Barons, and was quite willing to take advantage of their good will; so, before Matilda could reach England, her cousin Stephen had mounted the throne.

47. Then there was a civil war in this country, which was carried on, at times, for fifteen years, for a great many French noblemen came here with Matilda to fight for her; and some of the English Barons, who had become dissatisfied with Stephen, because he had not done all they expected he would do, joined the other party, and there was fighting all over the country.

48. Wherever there is civil war, there is sure to be famine and misery of all kinds, and there never was more misery in England than during the reign of king Stephen; for, in order to keep as many of the Barons on his side as he could, he let them do just as they pleased; and he gave titles and estates to a great many bold and bad men, who built castles and kept bands of ruffians, who went at night to rob and plunder the towns

and villages ; so that the people, when they shut up their houses at night, used to kneel down and pray that God would protect them from robbers and murderers.

49. At last, it was settled that Stephen should keep the crown as long as he lived ; but that Matilda's son, Henry Plantagenet, should succeed him ; and, soon after this arrangement, he died, having reigned nineteen years.

QUESTIONS.

1. How did the Normans improve the country ?
3. What is the origin of the game laws ?
5. How was the New Forest made ?
8. Which reigns are called the Norman period ?
15. When a baron died, how were his lands disposed of ?
18. How did the lesser barons become vassals of the great ones ?
21. What new feudal customs were brought here by the Normans ?
23. Who succeeded William the Conqueror ?
28. What was chivalry ?
31. Give some account of the Crusades.
35. Who succeeded William Rufus ?
36. How did he gain popularity ?
43. What was the first manufacture in England ?
45. To whom did Henry leave the crown ?
46. Who usurped the throne ?

CHAPTER IX.

HENRY THE SECOND, RICHARD THE FIRST, AND
JOHN.—1154 TO 1216.



JOHN SIGNING THE MAGNA CHARTA.

1. As soon as Henry the Second came to the throne, he began to set things to rights again. He had all the new castles pulled down, and made the bad men who had lived in them, leave the country; then he set people to work to

rebuild the towns that had been burned down in the late wars; and ordered that the judges should go on circuits; that is, travel to all the cities, and hold assizes, two or three times a year, as they do now, to see that justice is done to every body.

2. But it was not quite so easy to do justice then; for, as long as the feudal laws lasted, the rich could always oppress the poor, and every great man had an army of his own vassals, who would do any thing he bade them, whether it was lawful or not.

3. Now the king wisely thought that the best thing in the world for the country would be to give more freedom to the people, so that the Barons might not have quite so much power.

4. He, therefore, granted charters to some of the cities, which made them a little more independent; but it was by very slow degrees that the people of England became free, although this happy change was beginning to take place.

5. Another thing the king wanted to do, was to make the clergy answerable to the judges for any bad acts they might commit, instead of having particular laws and judges for themselves; and, I am sorry to say, they sometimes did very wicked things, for which they were not punished half so severely as other people would

have been for similar offences, which certainly was unjust.

6. But the bishops were unwilling to let the king have any thing to do with church affairs, and the Pope encouraged them to oppose him, in this respect; for the Pope, in those days, had more power over all Europe than the kings themselves, who seldom dared to disobey him.

7. The person who quarrelled most with Henry about these things was Thomas à Becket, archbishop of Canterbury, a very proud man, who wanted to rule both king and state his own way.

8. The king was so much annoyed at the opposition he constantly met with from the archbishop, that one day, in a fit of passion, he said he wished that troublesome priest was dead; on which some persons, who heard these incautious words thinking to get into favor, rode off to Canterbury, and killed the archbishop in his Cathedral.

9. But they gained nothing by this wicked deed; for the king was shocked when he heard of it, and sorry for what he had said; which shows how wrong it is for people to use violent expressions when they feel angry.

10. One very remarkable event which occurred in this reign, was the conquest of Ireland. That

country had been, for many years, divided into several small kingdoms, and the disputes of the chiefs had often given rise to warfare among themselves; but it now happened that the king of Leinster, having been deposed by another prince, went direct to the king of England, to beg his assistance, which Henry readily promised, on condition that, if he were restored, he should hold his kingdom as a vassal of the English crown.

11. Dermot, that was the name of the Irish prince, agreed to these terms, and several English knights and noblemen undertook the enterprise. After a great many interesting adventures, which are told in the history of Ireland, Dermot was replaced on his throne; but other quarrels arising among the chiefs, the English continued the war, and, after some time, the Irish chiefs acknowledged the king of England as a lord and master of Ireland, which has been under the authority of the English government ever since.

12. Henry the Second died in 1189, and was succeeded by his son Richard, who was called Cœur-de-lion, because he was very brave, so that every body said he had the heart of a lion.

13. Now it is a very good thing for men to be brave, for I do not know what we should do

without brave men for soldiers and sailors, to fight for us ; but it is not the most useful quality a king can possess ; and I think you will agree with me, when I tell you that Richard the First, instead of staying at home to make good laws, and take care of his subjects, went away to fight, or gain glory, as fighting was then called, in the Holy Land, while all things were going wrong in England, for the want of somebody to keep order.

14. But there was some excuse for him, as every body in those days thought that the most praiseworthy act princes and nobles could do, was to fight for their religion against all persons who believed differently from themselves ; so Richard was very much admired by his people, although he did nothing for their real benefit ; but, on the contrary, caused them very much misery, and great distress.

15. Another evil was that the Barons, who went with him to the Crusades, took all their own money as well as all they could get from their tenants, to support themselves and their fighting men abroad, so that the generality of the people were left very poor.

16. A great number, indeed, obtained their freedom, by giving up all they had to their lords ; but then they were left without money or em-

ployment, and many turned robbers, to save themselves from starving; therefore, you see, it was not always a good thing, at first, for the bondmen to be set at liberty; but it was good in the end, for their children were born free, and, as times got better, the free middle classes began to be of some consequence, and have gone on gradually increasing in wealth and importance, till they have now become the best safeguard and support of the country.

17. While Richard was gone to the wars, his brother John, who was a very bad man, wanted to make himself king in England, and there were some of the nobles who encouraged him, while others defended the rights of the absent monarch; so that there was great confusion, and the laws were sadly disregarded.

18. At last, Richard heard of all these bad doings, and left the Holy Land, intending to come home as fast as he could; but, unfortunately, he was made prisoner, on his way, by the Duke of Austria, and confined in a castle in Germany for some time before the English people knew what had become of him.

19. Richard knew this duke was his enemy, because he had affronted him when in the Holy Land, so he had taken the precaution of disguising himself in passing through his dominions,

and took with him only a single page; but, one day, being tired and hungry, he stopped to rest at a village near Vienna, and sent his page into that city to buy some provisions.

20. The youth, foolishly, hung a pair of handsome gloves in his belt, and as gloves were, in those days, only worn by persons of the highest rank, this circumstance excited suspicion, and he was arrested, and obliged to confess the truth.

21. The duke immediately sent a band of soldiers to seize the king, whom they found busy turning some meat that was roasting at the fire.

22. He started up, drew his sword, and fought valiantly, but was captured, and sent to a strong fortress, where he had remained a prisoner some months, when he was discovered, it has been stated, by a wandering minstrel, who heard him singing in his prison, and knew his voice. But this is a fabulous tale.

23. A large sum was raised in England, by taxes, for his ransom, and he came back; but he did not stay long at home; for he had quarrelled, while in the Holy Land, with the king of France, and went over to Normandy for the purpose of going to war with him, where he was killed by a poisoned arrow, aimed at him from

the walls of a castle he was besieging, in the year 1199, having reigned ten years.

24. Prince John was now made king of England, but he had no lawful right to the throne, as prince Arthur, the orphan son of an elder brother, was living, and was the true heir, according to the rules of succession.

25. But this unfortunate prince was made prisoner, in Normandy, by his wicked uncle, and most people believe he met with a violent death.

26. It was a very serious misfortune for the country when the king happened to be a bad man, because the government was, at that time, despotic; that is, the king made the laws himself, and had the power of doing whatever he pleased; whereas, now, the laws are made by the parliament; so that, before any new act can be passed, a great many good and clever men must agree to it, which is a great protection to the people.

27. However, king John was compelled much against his will, to make some very good laws, and the reason of this was, that his tyranny was felt by the nobles even more than the common people, for their estates were often unjustly seized, and they were obliged to give him large sums of money to get them back

again; then he would not let them marry unless they paid him for leave to do so; and if any person wanted to go out of the country, they were obliged to buy his permission. In short, no one was free to do any thing till the consent of the king was obtained by a handsome present.

28. At length, his tyranny was carried to such a height that the chief nobles resolved to make him act more justly, or dethrone him; so they wrote down, on parchment, all the things they wished to have done, or altered, and agreed with each other that, if he refused to sign it, they would go to war with him, and they took care to have all their vassals armed, and in readiness.

29. John was very much frightened when he found the barons were in earnest, and agreed to meet them at a place called Runnymede, between Staines and Windsor, where, after a great deal of disputing, he was obliged to sign his name to what they had written, which thus became the law of the land. An ancient copy of this parchment is now in the British Museum.

30. It is called Magna Charta, which is the Latin name for 'the Great Charter;' and it was framed with a view to take from the king the power of doing unjust things, and to make him govern according to the laws, and not to be able

to make new laws, or impose new taxes, at his pleasure.

31. This famous act is generally regarded as the beginning of the liberty which all Englishmen are so justly proud of; but the laws it contained were, in many respects often broken by the sovereigns of England, for a very long period.

32. The Barons of England still lived in their castles, on their own estates, in the midst of their vassals and serfs. Their castle-halls were crowded with knights, squires, pages, and military dependents, for it was their pride to have as many of such retainers as they could possibly maintain. The pages were boys of high rank, generally the younger sons of noblemen, whose profession was to be knight errantry.

33. Now, in order to obtain the honour of knighthood, they were obliged to serve some great baron, first as pages, then as esquires, for several years, and to be very obedient and respectful in their conduct, and do all that was required of them readily and cheerfully.

34. While pages, they had to wait upon their lords and his guests at dinner and supper, to carry messages, and perform little services for the ladies of the family; but they were themselves waited upon by the domestic slaves, and,

when they had finished their day's duties, were allowed to mix with the company.

35. They were taught to use the sword and lance, and to manage a horse skilfully, and were instructed in religious duties by the priests of their lord's household.

36. When old enough, they were made esquires, and then their duties were to take care of the horses and armour, and to attend their lords on all occasions ; which services he usually rewarded by making them knights, when they were free to go wherever they pleased ; and you have already been told what their mode of life was afterwards.

37. The great people were very fond of hunting and hawking, and fighting at tournaments ; but, perhaps, you do not know what a tournament was, so I will tell you.

38. There was a place built up, something like a large theatre, with galleries for the ladies and gentlemen, to sit and see the combats in the open space below, and this was called the lists. Then the gentlemen, who wished to exhibit their valour, used to come in armour, and fight with each other on horseback till one was conquered, when the victor received a prize from the greatest lady present.

39. When only two knights fought, it was called a tilt; but if there were several on each side, it was a tournament; and, although these combats were held for sport, the combatants were often dangerously wounded, and sometimes killed.

40. When John had signed Magna Charta, the Barons went home to their castles, to enjoy their usual pleasures; but the king had no intention of behaving any better than before, and secretly sent agents to Flanders, to raise troops of foreigners, promising that they should be allowed to plunder the estates of the Barons, if they would enlist in his service.

41. Thus he soon appeared at the head of an army, and went to war with the nobles, who, in revenge, did a very wrong and foolish thing, which was, to offer the crown to Louis, the son of the king of France.

42. Louis soon came over with a French army, and, after having in vain tried to take Dover Castle, he entered London in triumph, whilst John was obliged to retreat; but the Barons began to think they had done wrong, and, as John died suddenly, in the midst of this confusion, they turned their arms against Louis, and forced him to leave the country.

QUESTIONS.

1. What were the first acts of Henry the Second?
7. Who was Thomas a Becket?
8. How was the death of Becket caused?
10. What conquest was made in this reign?
12. When did Henry die, and who succeeded him?
13. How did Richard employ the chief part of his reign?
17. What occurred in England during his absence?
22. What happened to the king on his way home?
23. State the date and manner of his death.
24. Who was the next king?
27. How did the king act towards the nobles?
30. What was Magna Charta?
40. What did the king do after he had signed that Charter?

CHAPTER X.

FROM THE DEATH OF KING JOHN TO THE
ACCESSION OF RICHARD THE SECOND.
1216 to 1399.



DEATH OF LLEWELLYN.

1. THE reign of Henry the Third, who was only nine years of age when he succeeded his father, was a very long and a very unhappy one.
2. At first, things went on very well, because the king had a good guardian, the Earl of Pem-

broke, who managed the government wisely; but he, in a few years, died, and others came into power who did not act so well, and the king was too young to know what was right himself.

3. It was a pity the good earl died, for, if Henry had been fortunate enough to have had a wise instructor, he might have been a better sovereign, but, as it was, he was a very bad one.

4. The great mischief was this. He married a French princess, who had no more wisdom than himself; and they were both so extravagant that they spent a great deal more money than they could afford; and, then, to get fresh supplies, the king ordered the people to pay more taxes, and began to do all the unjust things that had caused so much misery in the time of his father.

5. Sometimes the Barons assembled and obliged him to promise he would abide by the terms of Magna Charta; but he soon forgot his promises, and went on the same as before, so that the people were worse and worse off every year, and many men became robbers on the highways, because they could not support their families by honest industry.

6. This was the state of affairs for many years, till at last, there was a civil war again, and, after a great deal of fighting and bloodshed, the king and his eldest son, Edward, were made

prisoners in a battle, fought at Lewes, in Sussex, in 1264, and the Earl of Leicester, the king's brother-in-law, took the government upon himself.

7. This was an important event, because the earl summoned a parliament to consult as to what it would be best to do under these circumstances; and he desired that, besides the nobles and bishops, there should come to this parliament knights, or gentlemen from every county, and citizens and burghers, from every city and burgh to state what the condition of the people really was, and to help to advise what could be done for them; so that the commoners were now, probably, for the first time, admitted to some share in the government of the country, which was a great step gained by the people, who, before this, had no representatives in the national council, or parliament, to take their part; and this was the beginning of our House of Commons, so it is worth remembering.

8. Prince Edward, after this, escaped from Hereford, where he had been kept a prisoner, and gained a great victory over the Barons, and replaced his father Henry on the throne; after which, he went on a crusade to the Holy Land.

9. He had married a Spanish princess, named Eleanor, who was the first person, in England,

that had a carpet, which she brought from Spain, for the floors of the best apartments in the palace were strewed with rushes ; and, in houses, where they could not get rushes, they used straw.

10. Henry the Third died about seven years after his restoration, in the year 1272, having reigned fifty-seven years ; and, although the news was sent to his son as soon as possible, it was nearly two years before he returned to England ; such was the difference between travelling then and now ; for the journey to and from the Holy Land may now be accomplished in a few weeks.

11. Edward the First was a much wiser and better prince than his father, but he was too fond of war, and too anxious to be renowned as a conqueror, which was the cause of the long wars in Scotland, for his great ambition was to conquer that country.

12. But, the first thing he thought of, when he came home, was to make such regulations as were most likely to protect the people from robbery ; so he had watchmen and patrols appointed in all the cities, and ordered that nobody should be abroad in the streets of London, nor any taverns kept open, after the curfew bell had tolled.

13. The curfew was instituted by William the Conqueror, to prevent fires, which were very frequent, when houses were in general built of wood, and thatched; so, when this bell tolled at eight o'clock, the people, for a long time after the conquest, were obliged to put out their fires and candles; but the custom of tolling the bell was continued after that of putting out fire and candle was done away with, and even to this day, in many places.

14. Edward the First took care that the magistrates should do their duty, and punished those who broke the laws, which the kings had been afraid to do in the last two reigns, because their lives would have been in danger if they had.

15. I must also tell you that this wise monarch did not alter what the Earl of Leicester had done about the parliament; but he made it a rule that the people should continue to send their members, and every freeholder of land in the counties, and, in general, all men, in the cities and burghs, who paid taxes, had a right to vote at the election of members of parliament.

16. I should be glad to have nothing to say about warfare in this reign; but the Scottish wars form so large a portion of the history of the times, that you ought to know something about them.

17. First, however, the king invaded the northern part of Wales, which had never been conquered by the English, and was then governed by a prince, named Llewellyn.

18. This chief made a gallant resistance, but he was killed, and the whole country was then united to England, and afterwards, in the reign of Henry the Eighth, divided into shires.

19. The queen, Eleanor, of Castile, Edward's first wife, went to visit Wales soon afterwards, and her son Edward was born there, so the king said he should be called prince of Wales, and that is the reason why the eldest son of the English sovereign has since had that title.

20. After this, there were a few years of peace, before the wars with Scotland were begun; so I will fill up the time by saying a little about the manners and customs of the English at this period.

21. The nobles lived in, what we should think, a very rough way indeed. Their large comfortless rooms, and floors without carpets, unglazed windows, and clumsy furniture, would not suit our modern notions, either of comfort or convenience.

22. They had their dinner at ten o'clock in the morning, in the great hall of the castle; lords, ladies, knights, esquires, priests, depend-

ents, and strangers, all together ; for, when there were no inns, it was usual for travellers to stop at any castle, or monastery, on the road, where they were never refused lodging and entertainment.

23. There were no table cloths, and the dishes and cups were mostly of wood, but they were well filled with meat, game, fish, or poultry, which, with bread and ale, constituted the rude, but substantial fare.

24. The Baron, with his friends, sat at an upper table, which was served with wine ; and, sometimes he would have his hounds lying at his feet, and his favorite hawk, upon a perch, beside him.

25. The supper, at five o'clock, was just like the dinner, and these were the only regular meals at that period.

26. I said there were no inns in those days, which reminds me to speak of the difficulty and danger of travelling. The roads were very bad and lonely, often running through forests and across wide heaths, infested with robbers.

27. Then there were no public conveyances of any kind, nor any way of making a journey, but on horseback, or on foot ; and, as to stopping at the country towns, there was very little accommodation to be had there, for they were poor

places, the houses in them being very little better than wooden sheds.

28. There were no shops, so that every thing was bought, as formerly, at the markets and fairs.

29. A great many merchants, from London, France, and Flanders, used to bring goods to the fairs for sale, and they were obliged to pay tolls and duties to the lord of the manor, which came to a great deal of money, because they brought a quantity of valuable merchandise, as the nobles themselves purchased their wearing apparel, jewellery, spices, and many other commodities, at the fairs, which sometimes lasted fifteen days.

30. The dress of the great nobility, in the fourteenth century, was very handsome, for they wore mantles of satin or velvet, with borders worked in gold, over jackets highly embroidered; and their velvet caps were often adorned with jewels.

31. The middle classes wore close coats of cloth, with leather belts round the waist, such as the Blue-Coat Boys now wear, and they had tight pantaloons, short boots, and cloth caps.

32. The clothing of the working people was made of very coarse wool, sometimes undyed, and all spun and woven at home by the women,

who had nothing else for their own wearing, as there were no cottons or stuffs made in England then, nor any of the nice comfortable things that the poor people can get so cheap now.

33. The country towns were at this period inhabited chiefly by free artisans, such as blacksmiths, carpenters, and others, of different trades; but there were still a great many villeins and serfs, on all the cultivated lands, for slavery was never abolished in England by any act of parliament, but gradually died away with the feudal laws.

34. The armies were not raised then as they were at an earlier period, by feudal service, but soldiers were hired and paid by the day; but there was no standing army, as there is at present; for, as soon as the wars were over, the men were all discharged, which was a bad thing, as it often happened they had no homes or employment to return to, and so formed themselves into bands of robbers.

35. However, fighting men had plenty of occupation during the reign of Edward the First, of whose wars in Scotland I am now about to speak.

36. The King of Scotland died about this time, and as he left no son, and his granddaughter and heiress, Margaret, died soon after,

unmarried, there were two princes, who each thought he had a right to succeed to the throne; so they agreed to let the king of England decide the dispute, which he readily took upon himself to do. One prince was named Robert Bruce, the other, John Baliol.

37. Edward said Baliol ought to be king, and he was crowned accordingly; but the English monarch soon began to find fault with him, and at last went to war, for he made up his mind to try to unite England and Scotland into one kingdom, and to be the king of both countries himself; but he did not succeed, although he dethroned Baliol, and was at war with Scotland for nearly eleven years.

38. I dare say you have heard of a renowned Scottish chief, called Sir William Wallace. He fought bravely for his country in these wars, but he was taken prisoner at the battle of Falkirk; and, I am sorry to say, king Edward was so cruel and unjust as to have his head cut off.

39. But this did not put an end to the war, for another chief, Robert Bruce, grandson of him before-mentioned, took the place of Wallace, gained several victories, and was crowned king.

40. The two sovereigns then prepared for a long war, and Edward was on his way to Scot-

land, with his army, when he was taken ill, and died in the year 1307, having reigned thirty-four years.

41. His son, Edward the Second, was so careless of every thing but his own pleasure, that he neglected the affairs of both England and Scotland, so that the Scots recovered all they had lost; and when, at last, the king was persuaded to renew the war, he met with such a terrible defeat at the battle of Bannockburn, that the Scots are proud of it to this very day.

42. There is nothing more worth telling about the reign of Edward the Second, whose misconduct caused many of the barons to rebel, and he was, at last, made prisoner by them, and cruelly murdered, in Berkeley castle, in 1327, having reigned about twenty years.

43. His son, Edward the Third, was scarcely fifteen, at the time of his father's death; but he was a very clever prince, and soon began to manage the affairs of the country himself.

44. He married a Flemish princess, named Philippa, who was much beloved by the English people, as, indeed, she deserved to be, for she was both good and beautiful, as well as one of the cleverest ladies of her time, and she employed her talents in doing all the good she could for England.

45. She knew that the people of her own country, which was Flanders, had grown rich by their trade and manufactures, so she did all in her power to increase the trade of England, and paid a number of Flemish weavers to come over here and settle at Norwich, that they might improve the people there, in the art of making woollen cloth and stuffs, for which a manufactory had been established by Edward the First.

46. She also founded several schools, and was a friend to those who distinguished themselves by their learning.

47. I must not forget to tell you that Chaucer, the first great poet that wrote in English, lived at this time, and received much kindness from the King and Queen.

48. The English language was now beginning to be spoken by the higher classes, instead of French, and was not very unlike the English spoken now, as you might see, if you were to look at the poems written by Chaucer.

49. Edward the Third was, unfortunately, as fond of war as his grandfather. He renewed the war with Scotland, but his great wars were in France, for his ambition was to be king of that country, and he pretended he had a right to

the throne, because his mother was the sister of the late king.

50. But the French thought otherwise, and chose another prince for their king, so Edward invaded France, where he commenced a long and destructive war, which lasted nearly forty years, and was carried on, for a great part of that time, by his eldest son, who was called the Black Prince, because he wore black armour.

51. He made great conquests in the south of France, and, at the celebrated battle of Poitiers, took the French king prisoner, and brought him to England, where he remained a captive for the rest of his life, but was treated with so much kindness and respect, that he had little to complain of but the loss of his liberty.

52. The Black Prince was not only a brave warrior, but was a good and clever man; therefore, his death, which happened a few months before that of his father, was a great grief to the English people.

53. Edward the Third died in 1377, after a long reign of fifty years. He had been a pretty good king, had made the people obey the laws, and, in general, observed them himself.

54. When he wanted money for the French wars, he had allowed the villeins and serfs, on his manors, or crown lands, to buy their freedom, so

that there were now, comparatively, but few of the lower orders remaining in bondage ; and the agricultural labourers were paid for their labour, as well as the artisans and mechanics.

55. Their wages were, in general, from twopence to threepence a day, but you must remember that twopence, at that time, was equal, in purchasing the necessities of life, to about one shilling and eightpence of our money, and would buy much more than sufficient food for a whole family.

56. They lived chiefly on meat, brown bread, and ale ; for there were no vegetables for the table, cultivated by the people in England, till the time of Henry the Eighth ; nor any potatoes, till that of Queen Elizabeth ; and then they were considered a dainty dish, and only seen at the tables of very rich people.

57. However, there were gardens, orchards, and vineyards, belonging to the monasteries, and to persons of high rank and fortune.

QUESTIONS.

1. Who succeeded king John ?
2. What were the consequences of the king's misconduct ?
7. What great change was made in parliament, and how ?
9. Who first brought a carpet into England ?
10. How long did Henry the Third reign ? and by whom was he succeeded ?

11. What was the character of Edward the First ?
12. Mention some of his first acts ?
15. How did he regulate the parliament ?
18. How was Wales united to England ?
37. What gave rise to the Scottish wars ?
38. Who was the great Scottish chief and patriot; and what was his fate ?
39. Who was made king of Scotland
40. When did Edward die ? and who succeeded him ?
41. What became of Edward the Second ?
43. Who was the next king ?
44. Whom did he marry ?
47. Who was the first great English poet ?
49. Why did Edward the Third invade France ?
53. When did the death of Edward take place ?
54. How did Edward the Third raise money for the wars ?

CHAPTER XI.

FROM THE ACCESSION OF RICHARD THE SECOND TO
THE WAR OF THE ROSES.—1392 TO 1429.



ABDICATION OF RICHARD.

1. RICHARD the Second, the son of Edward, the Black Prince, was but eleven years old when, by the death of his grandfather, he became king of England. His uncles governed the country till he was old enough to act for himself; but they did not teach him to be a wise, nor a just

man, and this injustice was the cause of all his misfortunes.

2. One of the first things he did on his own account, was to break a promise he made to the people; and this was how it happened. A new tax had caused great discontent among the labouring classes, and their unwillingness to pay it was increased by the insolence of the collectors, who, one day, in the house of a man called Walter, or Wat Tiler, behaved so ill to his daughter, that he gave one of them a blow on the head with his hammer, which unluckily killed him.

3. Now the neighbours knew that if Walter should be taken, he would be put to death for the offence, and as they all had cause to complain of the tax-gatherers, they assembled in front of his cottage, and declared they would protect him.

4. This was at Deptford, and they all proceeded to London, being joined by thousands of men from different towns, and a dreadful riot there was; so that it was thought necessary for the king to take some means of pacifying the rebels.

5. Accordingly he went, with the lord mayor and some nobles and gentlemen, to meet them in Smithfield, and whilst Tiler, their leader, was

talking with the king, the mayor came behind him, and struck him on the head with his mace, and stunned him, and he was killed by Richard's party; and then the king, fearing the rioters would kill him in return, asked them what they wanted, saying, he was ready to do any thing that was right and just.

6. They said they desired that the poll tax should be taken off; slavery and villeinage abolished by law; so that all who were still in bondage should be made free; and that the old feudal custom of paying duties on goods, at all the markets and fairs, should be done away with.

7. All this Richard promised to do; but no sooner had the men dispersed and gone back to their homes, than he sent out a military force to seize all who had been concerned in the rebellion; and I grieve to say that, although he had given his word that they should all be pardoned, he ordered the judges to have every one of them executed.

8. After such conduct as this, you will not expect to hear much good of Richard the Second, whose selfish extravagance led him to do all kinds of unjust things, for the purpose of raising money to spend on his own pleasures; so that it might truly be said that he was con-

stantly robbing his subjects; as, for instance, he once wanted to borrow a large sum of the citizens of London, which they would not lend him, because they knew very well he would never return it; so he took away their charter, that is, the grant which gives them the right to elect a lord mayor, and to manage the affairs of the city independently of the king; and they were obliged to give him ten times as much to get it back again, as they had refused to lend.

9. The citizens of London were very rich at this period, many of them being great merchants, and it was in this reign that the famous Whittington was Lord Mayor.

10. He had made a large fortune in the coal trade, which was then a new branch of commerce, for coals were very little used for firing till the time of Edward the Third.

11. King Richard had unjustly banished his cousin Henry, Earl of Hereford, and on the death of Henry's father, the Duke of Lancaster, had taken possession of his estates.

12. This nobleman was a grandson of Edward the Third, and was much liked by the English, who would rather have had him for their king than the unworthy sovereign they had got, although he would have had no right to the throne, even if Richard had been dead.

13. However, he came back to England, and finding most of the nobles as well as the people willing to make him king, Richard was obliged to resign the crown, and was imprisoned in Pomfret castle, where it is supposed he died by unfair means; but as this is not quite certain, we will hope it was not so. He had reigned twenty-two years, when he was deposed, in 1399.

14. This usurpation of Henry the Fourth was the cause of the long civil wars in England, called the Wars of the Roses, which began in the time of Henry the Sixth, whose right to the throne was disputed, although his father and grandfather had been suffered to reign without opposition.

15. Henry the Fourth was, on the whole, a popular monarch, and under his government things went on pretty well with the generality of the people.

16. There was an insurrection in Wales, headed by a gentleman, named Owen Glendower, who wished to restore the Welsh to their former independence, and to be their prince, as he was of the ancient royal family; and he was joined by the powerful Earl of Northumberland, and his son Henry Percy, better known

by the name of Hotspur, who was one of the bravest knights of the age.

17. These noblemen had a quarrel with the king, and wanted to depose him ; but he gained a victory over them in a battle fought near Shrewsbury, where Hotspur was killed. These events are not of much importance, but I tell them because when you hear any celebrated characters spoken of, you ought to know who they were, and when they lived.

18. The prince of Wales, afterwards Henry the Fifth, was also celebrated for his valour, but not for his good behaviour in his youth ; for his conduct was sometimes so disgraceful that his father was quite ashamed of him, and nobody would have supposed he was the son of a king.

19. One thing he used to do was to go out at night, with some idle companions, and rob people on the highway, for amusement ; yet he had not a bad disposition, for once one of the judges sent him to prison for trying to rescue one of his wicked companions ; and he not only submitted to the punishment, but when he came to be king, he treated that judge with great respect and attention, because he knew he was a just man, and would punish the rich as well as the poor, if they did wrong. King Henry

the Fourth died in 1413, in the fourteenth year of his reign.

20. Henry the Fifth is famed as the conqueror of France. He went to war with that country, on the same pretext that Edward the Third did before ; and with better success, for the French king was at last glad to make peace by agreeing that Henry should be king of France after his death.

21. The greatest victory gained by the English, was at the battle of Agincourt. King Henry married the French king's daughter, but he died soon afterwards, in 1422, having reigned nine years ; and leaving an infant son ; and in a little while the king of France died too, and he also left a son.

22. Then there was a dispute which of these princes should be king of France, and a new war was begun which lasted many years, during which the English lost all that the armies of Henry the Fifth had won.

23. In the mean time the young king, Henry the Sixth, grew up so weak in mind and sickly in body, that he was not able to govern the country ; therefore, his ministers and the queen, a French princess, named Margaret of Anjou, had to manage every thing for him.

24. But many people did not like the queen,

and began to say that her husband had no right to the throne as his grandfather was a usurper ; but that Richard, Duke of York, ought to be king of England ; while others said that, as the Parliament had consented to let the family of the Duke of Lancaster reign, it was lawful for them to keep the crown ; and that although king Henry was not fit for a ruler, the rights of his son, prince Edward, ought to be protected.

25. The Duke of York was then governor of Ireland, but when he heard of these disputes, he came back, and was placed at the head of the government here, instead of the queen.

26. I think you will now quite understand why there was a civil war in England. Every nobleman in the country took one side or the other, and the friends of the Duke of York wore a white rose or ribbon rosette ; while those who supported the king, or House of Lancaster, wore a crimson one ; as people now wear different colored ribbons at an election, to show which party they belong to ; and this is why these wars are called the Wars of the Roses.

QUESTIONS.

1. Who succeeded Edward the Third ?
2. Who was Wat Tiler, and how was his rebellion occasioned ?

4. How did the rebels proceed ?
5. What means were taken to quell the insurrection ?
6. What were the demands of the rebels ?
7. What was the conduct of Richard on this occasion ?
12. Who was the Earl of Hereford ?
13. How was Richard dethroned, and what became of him ?
16. What battle was fought in this reign, and why ?
17. Who was killed in this battle ?
18. Who succeeded Henry the Fourth ?
20. How did Henry the Fifth distinguish himself ?
23. What was the character of Henry the Sixth ?
24. What gave rise to the Wars of the Roses ?

CHAPTER XII.

THE WARS OF THE ROSES.—1422 TO 1461.



EDWARD IV.

1. THE civil wars may be said to have lasted thirty years, from the first battle at St. Alban's, in 1455, to the battle of Bosworth, in 1485; for

although there were intervals of peace, the quarrel between the house of York and Lancaster was not finally settled till the two families were united by the marriage of Henry the Seventh, who was heir of the House of Lancaster, with Elizabeth, the grand-daughter of Richard, Duke of York, and heiress of that family.

2. During that thirty years, the country was, as you may suppose, in a very unhappy condition. Every Baron wanted to collect as many men around him as he could, to defend his castle in case of siege; so the countrymen left their rural labors and went to enlist in the service of this or that nobleman, because they were sure of getting plenty to eat and drink.

3. Thus the castle halls were crowded, but the fields were left without sufficient laborers to plough and sow them, consequently the crops were generally bad, and bread was at times, so dear, that many poor families could get none at all, but were obliged to eat herbs and berries that they found in the woods, which did not nourish them, so that numbers died of want.

4. Many battles were fought in different parts of England, and the queen was present at some of them, for it was she who conducted the war, as the king was incapable of so much exertion,

and Margaret could not bear to see her young son Edward deprived of his birthright.

5. Three victories had been gained by the Duke of York, when he was killed at the battle of Wakefield; but this event did not put an end to the contest, for his son Edward, who succeeded to his title, continued the war and, in the end, became king of England, while poor king Henry was kept a prisoner in the Tower, where he died in 1471.

6. Edward owed his success chiefly to the Earl of Warwick, the richest and most powerful nobleman in England, and considered as the last of the great feudal Barons, for it is said that he maintained no less than thirty thousand people at his own expense, who were ready to devote their lives to his service.

7. He had a great many castles in different parts of England, and a noble mansion in Warwick lane, London, which still bears that name, although it presents a very different appearance from what it did when this mighty Earl lived there like a sovereign prince, and the place was crowded with his armed retainers.

8. Edward had been very well received by the citizens of London, and crowned, with their consent, long before the death of king Henry.

9. Two battles were fought soon after his

accession to the throne, one at Towton the other at Hexham; and it was after the latter, that a story is told how queen Margaret wandered about in a forest with her little boy, till they were both half dead with hunger and fatigue, when she met with a robber, and instead of trying to avoid him, told him who she was, and begged he would protect her child.

10. The man took them to a cave, and gave them food and shelter, until he found an opportunity of getting them on board a vessel that was going to Scotland.

11. People were now in hopes there would be peace; but the new sovereign was so unwise as to quarrel with the Earl of Warwick, who became his enemy, and resolved to deprive him of the crown he had helped him to win.

12. Then the war was begun again, and went on for several years longer, till Warwick was killed at the battle of Barnet, on Easter Sunday, 1471, just ten years after the battle of Towton.

13. On the day of this battle, Queen Margaret, and her son, prince Edward, then a youth of eighteen, landed in England, for they had lived in France some years, and were sadly grieved at the news of Warwick's defeat and death; but as they had a great many friends, the

queen determined upon trying another battle, which was a great pity, for both herself and her son were made prisoners, and the young prince was killed in king Edward's tent, for making a spirited answer to some insulting question put to him by the haughty monarch.

14. The miserable mother was sent to the Tower, where her husband had just died; but she was afterwards released, and ransomed by her father; and she returned to live with him in France, her native country.

15. And now, that we have done with the wars, we may begin to think of something more pleasant. Have you ever heard it was in the reign of Edward the Fourth that books were first printed in England?

16. The art of printing, which enables us to have so many nice books to instruct and amuse us, had lately been invented in Germany, and was brought here by an English merchant, named William Caxton, who went to Cologne, on purpose to learn how to print, and when he came back, he set up a printing-press in Westminster Abbey, which, at that time, was a monastery.

17. We ought to be very much obliged to the clever person that invented printing; for only think how very ignorant we should be, and

how much pleasure we should lose, if there were no books to tell us any thing.

18. There were books, certainly, before that time; but they were all written, and it took so long to copy them, that they were very expensive, so that none but very rich people could have even a few volumes.

19. Printed books were also, for a long time, much too dear to be in general use, but people of rank soon began to be much better educated than in former times, and their habits and manners became much improved in consequence.

20. Then a great many of the old Norman castles had been destroyed in the wars, which put an end, after a time, to the customs of chivalry; and the nobles, instead of sending their sons to be brought up for warlike knights, sent them to Oxford, or Cambridge, to become scholars; or to Eton College, which had been founded by Henry the Sixth.

21. King Edward died in 1483, when his eldest son, who is called Edward the Fifth, although he never was really king, was only thirteen years old; and he, and his younger brother, the Duke of York, were under the guardianship of their uncle Richard, Duke of Gloucester, who was a very bad man.

22. Instead of protecting the fatherless chil-

dren entrusted to his care, he only thought how he might take advantage of their youth to obtain the crown himself; so he sent them both to the Tower, but not as prisoners, for it was then used occasionally as a royal residence, especially in times of public disturbances; so Richard told the people the boys would be safe there; but in a little while it was reported that they were dead, and it was thought he had caused them to be murdered, which was most likely the truth, although some people think they were not put to death, but were kept there as prisoners for some years.

23. Richard the Third was not a very bad king, for he made some laws that were very useful to the merchants who traded with foreign countries, and he was the first who thought of having postmen, or couriers, to carry letters, so that, wicked as he was, we cannot say he did no good as a sovereign.

24. The post was, at first, only for government letters, and it was a long time before any arrangements were made for private persons to correspond by the same means; but this was done by degrees, and in the time of Oliver Cromwell, the General Post Office was established, when every body had the benefit of this excellent institution, which adds so much to peo-

ple's happiness ; for who could possibly be happy now, if they could not hear from their absent friends ?

25. Richard the Third reigned only two years, for he was disliked by the nobility, and a conspiracy was formed against him by the friends of the House of Lancaster, who were desirous of placing on the throne the heir of that family, Henry Tudor, Earl of Richmond.

26. This young nobleman was living in exile, at the time, in France. But he was soon informed of what was going on, and told the French king, who lent him forty ships, and about five thousand soldiers, with which he sailed directly for England, where he found friends ready to join him with more troops.

27. The battle of Bosworth was fought on the 22nd of August, 1485, when Richard was killed, and the conqueror proclaimed king on the field ; and thus ended the Wars of the Roses.

QUESTIONS.

1. What was the duration of the civil wars ?
2. Describe the general state of the country.
4. Who conducted the war for the king ?
5. How did the Duke of York lose his life ?
6. To whom did Edward owe his success ?
9. Name the battles that were fought after Edward became king ?

11. Why was the contest renewed ?
12. Where was the Earl of Warwick killed, and when ?
13. What happened after this battle ?
14. When were books first printed in England ?
16. Where was the art of printing invented ?
20. Who founded Eton College ?
21. Who obtained the crown on the death of Edward the Fourth ?
22. Relate the circumstances.
23. What was the origin and progress of the Post Office ?
25. How was the reign of Richard soon terminated ?
27. Name the date of the battle of Bosworth.

CHAPTER XIII.

FROM THE BATTLE OF BOSWORTH, TO QUEEN
ELIZABETH.—1461 TO 1558.



LADY JANE GREY REFUSING THE CROWN.

1. HENRY the Seventh was not an amiable man, but he had many qualities that were good and useful in a sovereign, and the country prospered greatly under his government.

2. One of the conditions on which he succeeded to the throne, was that he should marry the princess Elizabeth, daughter of Edward the

Fourth, and thus secure peace by uniting the families of York and Lancaster :—the princess Elizabeth was a lady much beloved by every body, and her many acts of benevolence were long remembered in England, so that she was generally called the good queen Bess.

3. The king wished to increase the wealth and prosperity of the nation, and he took the best means of doing so by promoting commerce. He made commercial treaties, that is, agreements about trade, with foreign princes, by which he obtained many advantages for the English merchants, just as our government has lately made a treaty with the emperor of China, about our trade in his country.

4. No English ship had ever been to China then, nor even to India ; and America had not yet been discovered ; but in the time of Henry the Seventh, the Spaniards and Portuguese made longer voyages than had ever been made before, and the celebrated Christopher Columbus, whom I dare say you have often heard of, found out by study, that there was an unknown land on the other side of the Atlantic Ocean, and although people laughed at him, he at last persuaded the king and queen of Spain to let him have ships, and sailors, and money, to go in search of it, so he was the first that found out

the way to America, which, for a long time, was called the New World.

5. Soon after this, the Portuguese found out the way to India by sea; and then the English began to make voyages of discovery also, and to find that the world had more countries in it than they had ever dreamed of before.

6. Maps and charts, which had been known to the Greeks and Romans, now began to be much improved, though they were still incorrect, as you may suppose.

7. However, all these new discoveries, together with the invention of printing, made people think more about learning, and less about fighting than they used to do; especially as the nobility were beginning to live more in the way they do now, and to have handsome houses in London, instead of living always in their gloomy old castles.

8. Their domestics were no longer slaves, but hired servants; their tenants were not villeins, but free farmers, who paid rent for their land; and the poor pesantry, no longer in bondage, were at liberty to go where they pleased, and were paid for their daily labour.

9. You remember that in the feudal times all the land in the country belonged to the king,

the nobles, the knights, and the bishops, and abbots.

10. But Edward the First made a law in favour of the sale and purchase of all lands except those held immediately of the king ; and Edward the Third gave his own vassals leave to sell their estates.

11. Other laws were afterwards made, by which landed property was made liable to seizure for debt, and might be given by will, or sold at the pleasure of the owner. And Henry the Seventh, by another law, further encouraged the sale of land, and the consequent division of large estates.

12. Then many of the nobles, who had more land than they wanted, sold some of it to wealthy merchants and others, who built large mansions, to which they often gave their own family name, as for instance, if the name of the proprietor happened to be Burton, he would probably call his residence Burton Hall.

13. These country gentlemen formed quite a new class of people in England, and they have ever since that time continued to increase in wealth, rank, and importance.

14. A strange thing happened in the reign of Henry the Seventh, which has made some people think the sons of Edward the Fourth

were not put to death in the Tower, as is generally believed, but you shall hear the story.

15. A young man, called Perkin Warbeck, came to Ireland from Flanders, and declared he was the younger of those two princes, and the lawful heir to the throne, as his brother was dead.

16. He told a wonderful tale, how he had escaped from the Tower, and related many adventures which he said had befallen him ; so the Irish people said they would fight for him, and try to take the crown from king Henry ; but as they could not raise a sufficient force by themselves, Warbeck applied to the king of France, who also promised to help him, and then he went to the Duchess of Burgundy, who was Edward the Fourth's sister, and, strange to say, that lady declared she believed the young man was her brother's son, and persuaded the Flemings to lend him their aid.

17. But the king of France changed his mind ; and made a treaty of peace with king Henry, who ordered the English merchants not to carry on any trade with Flanders while the Flemings continued to favour the cause of Perkin Warbeck, so they deserted him too.

18. I have not the room to tell you the rest of his adventures, but they ended in his being

taken prisoner by the king, who had him put to death as a traitor. Henry the Seventh reigned twenty-four years, and was succeeded in 1509 by his son, Henry the Eighth.

19. The young king was married to Catharine of Arragon, the daughter of the king of Spain, a beautiful and talented woman, who deserved a better husband, for Henry was a sad tyrant in his family, as well as over the nation.

20. The greatest man in the kingdom next to the king, was his minister, Cardinal Wolsey, who governed the country for many years, and was so rich, that he not only lived in as much splendour as the king, but he built the palaces of Hampton-court and Whitehall, and founded the College of Christ Church at Oxford.

21. A Cardinal is a priest of high dignity in the Catholic Church, being next in rank to the Pope.

22. Wolsey was clever and learned; but he was very proud, so he had many enemies, and at last fell into disgrace with the king, and died of grief.

23. Soon after this Henry chose to be separated from his good wife, Catharine, because he had seen a young lady named Anna Boleyn, whom he thought he should like to marry; so

he sent the queen and his daughter Mary, away from court, and made Anna Boleyn queen ; but he soon began to dislike her, and said she had done some very wicked things, as an excuse for sending her to the Tower, where he had her head cut off ; and then he married another young lady, named Jane Seymour, who soon died. She left a little baby, who was king Edward the Sixth ; and Anna Boleyn also had a baby, who was queen Elizabeth.

24. I must now tell you of a great change made by Henry the Eighth, with regard to religion, and called the Reformation.

25. The church of England had, till this period, been the same as that of Rome, and the people were Roman Catholics ; but there were a good many people in Germany, and in England also, who thought that some of the forms of the Catholic religion were not right, and ought to be altered, and these persons were called reformers, and all who adopted their opinions took the name of Protestants, because they protested against certain things.

26. Now Henry the Eighth had a disagreement with the Pope, about his second marriage ; so he determined to abolish the Catholic religion, to seize on and destroy the monasteries and nunneries, and to have Protestant

clergymen to preach and read the prayers in the churches.

27. It would be too long a story to tell you how he accomplished all this; but it was done. There were nearly a thousand religious houses, that is, convents, abbeys, and priories, in England, inhabited by monks and nuns, clerks and friars, of different orders, who had no other homes, nor any means of living, but on the property of the establishments to which they belonged; and these were all suppressed, together with many colleges and hospitals, which also supported a great many poor people.

28. The poor were very sorry the convents were broken up, for they had been accustomed to go there when they were in distress, for food, clothing, or medicine; and now they did not know where to get relief, as there were no workhouses; the hospitals, and all other charitable institutions, except some alms-houses, having been destroyed; nor was it till almost the middle of the reign of queen Elizabeth that any provision was made by law for the destitute poor.

29. The manufactures of England were now fast increasing. Manchester, Birmingham, and Sheffield, were beginning to be known as manu-

facturing towns ; the first, for woollens and cottons ; the others, for cutlery and hardware.

30. Pewter plates and dishes were made in large quantities, for they were now used in the most respectable families instead of wood ; hats were also made in England in this reign ; and a clock, the first ever manufactured in this country.

31. But nothing was more useful than the improvements made in gardening, for which we are indebted to the Flemings and Dutch, who were the best gardeners in Europe, and who brought here many kinds of vegetables for the table, such as cabbages, lettuces, &c., and many fruits that had not been cultivated in England since the time of the Romans, particularly cherries and currants.

32. Potatoes were not known until the reign of queen Elizabeth, when Sir Walter Raleigh brought some from America, and planted them, first in Ireland, little thinking, perhaps, that this root would, at a future time, be almost the only food of the Irish people.

33. Henry the Eighth had three more wives, Anne of Cleves, whom he divorced ; Catherine Howard, whom he had beheaded, like poor Anna Boleyn ; and Catherine Parr, who outlived him.

34. He reigned thirty-eight years, and was

succeeded by his son, Edward the Sixth, who was only nine years old, and died before he was sixteen ; so that he can scarcely be reckoned among the kings of England.

35. He was a pious and amiable prince, fond of learning, and extremely charitable. He founded St. Thomas's Hospital, for the sick poor ; and Christ's Hospital and School, for the education of boys who had lost their fathers.

36. He had a cousin, Lady Jane Grey, whom he was very fond of, for she was about his own age, gentle and beautiful, and being fond of study, was educated with him ; so that it was no wonder he liked her.

37. They were both Protestants ; but Edward's eldest sister, Mary, was a Catholic ; and as some of the great noblemen were Protestants, they did not like to have a Catholic queen ; so when the young king was dying, they persuaded him to make a will, leaving the crown to Lady Jane Grey, which was not right, because his father had ordered, and the parliament confirmed his will, that, if he died, Mary was to be queen. Edward the Sixth died in the seventh year of his reign.

38. Lady Jane was married to young Lord Guildford Dudley, and knew nothing about king Edward's will till after he was dead, when

her husband's father told her she was to be queen.

39. At first she refused, but was, at length, persuaded or compelled to allow herself to be proclaimed; and very unhappy it made her, so that she was very glad, at the end of ten days, to give up the title of queen to her who had a better right to it.

40. Now Mary was a woman of a morose temper; and, unfortunately, at that time, and long afterwards, people who differed in religious opinions were very cruel to each other; so she would not forgive poor Lady Jane Grey, but sent her and her husband to the Tower, where they were both beheaded.

41. The reign of queen Mary lasted only five years, and there is little to tell about it, except that she did all she could to restore the Roman Catholic religion, and re-established some of the monasteries; but they were suppressed again, after her death, by her sister Elizabeth, who had been brought up in the Protestant faith.

QUESTIONS.

2. How did Henry the Seventh secure peace?
3. How was the prosperity of the country increased?
4. What great discoveries were made in his reign?
7. What changes may be noticed in the mode of living?
8. How was a new class of people formed?

15. Who was Perkin Warbeck ?
18. Who succeeded Henry the Seventh ?
19. To whom was he married ?
20. Who was Cardinal Wolsey ?
23. Why did the king put away his first queen ?
25. What was the Reformation ?
26. How was this change accomplished ?
29. Which towns had become famous for their manufacture ?
33. How many wives had Henry the Eighth ?
34. How long did he reign, and who succeeded him ?
36. Who was Lady Jane Grey ?
37. What is chiefly remarkable of Queen Mary ?
41. By whom was she succeeded ?

CHAPTER XIV.

QUEEN ELIZABETH.—1558 TO 1603.



QUEEN ELIZABETH REVIEWING HER TROOPS.

1. ELIZABETH is one of the most celebrated of our sovereigns, for she was a remarkably clever woman, although, like her father, she was harsh and tyrannical.

2. It was a merry day in England when she was crowned, for great numbers of the people had not liked queen Mary. The citizens of

London testified their joy by decorating the outsides of their houses with draperies of silk and satin ; and by having shows and pageants in the streets, as was customary, at that time, on all joyful occasions.

3. In one place, a fountain ran with wine ; in another, a boy, dressed to represent an angel with wings, descended from the top of an arch, as the queen's chariot was passing under, and presented her with a bible ; then was drawn up again by a cord, to look as if he flew away ; and there were many other things of the same kind, which I have not room to tell of.

4. The ladies and gentlemen who attended the queen rode on horseback, for coaches were not used in England till some years afterwards, when a gentleman, from Holland, brought a carriage over here, and then the English soon began to build coaches, and ladies of rank left off riding on horses, as they used to do, seated on a pillion, behind their husbands.

5. Elizabeth was a good queen in many respects, for she was a friend to learning, commerce, and all useful arts ; and she chose able ministers, who ruled the country with wisdom and prudence ; but she behaved very cruelly about religion, for although numbers of the peo-

ple were still Catholics, she made a law that every body should go to Protestant churches; and those who did not were put in prison, or made to pay such large sums of money, that they were quite ruined.

6. In other countries, particularly the Netherlands, the Protestants were as ill-treated as the Catholics were here, so that a great many of them came to England, and were very useful in teaching the English several arts and manufactures they did not know before.

7. Pins, needles, and paper, were now first made in England, and the cotton and other factories were greatly improved, so that there was more employment for the working classes.

8. Then workhouses were established for the destitute, and all householders, for the first time, were obliged to pay a tax, called the poor rate, to support and find the poor in food and clothes, so that they might not be driven, by want, to beg or steal.

9. The middle classes became more wealthy, and lived in better style than at any former period, especially the citizens of London, many of whom were rich merchants, living like noblemen, and among these was Sir Thomas Gresham, who built the first Royal Exchange, at his own ex-

pense, and gave a grand dinner there to the queen, in the year 1570.

10. English merchants now began to think of trading to the East Indies: but as it required a great deal of money to fit out ships, to make so long a voyage, for it took about four times as long then as it does now, a number of rich merchants joined together, and for a sum of money, obtained a charter from the queen, which made it unlawful for any other persons to carry on any trade with that part of the world.

11. It is very interesting to read how this East India Company first were only permitted just to land in India, and buy and sell a few goods; then, how they obtained permission of the emperor, for there was an emperor of India then, to build some warehouses on the sea coast, and form a little settlement, called a factory; then how they gradually established more factories, and took soldiers to protect them, and gained possession of lands, where they built towns, so that many English families went to live there.

12. Such was the beginning of the British empire in India; and, I dare say, that if the emperor could have foreseen the consequences, he would not have consented to have an English factory built on his coast.

13. In the reign of Elizabeth, Captain Francis Drake made a voyage all round the world, though he was not the first navigator who did so, but he was the first English one.

14. This was a grand exploit, as few people had believed, then, that it was possible, or that the world was really a round body; so you see how these voyages tended to increase knowledge, as well as to improve commerce.

15. When Drake returned, the queen went to dine with him on board his ship, and made him a knight, after which he was called Sir Francis Drake, and he soon became an admiral.

16. In the mean time, several voyages had been made to America, and Sir Walter Raleigh, who was one of the great men of the time, had taken possession of a tract of land for the queen of England, which he called Virginia, and it still bears that name.

17. The Europeans behaved very unjustly about America, for although the natives were savages, they had no right to take away their lands.

18. But they did so in every place they went to; and if they were Spaniards, they set up the Spanish flag, and the commander of the ship said, "I take this country for the king of Spain;" and then would fight with the poor natives, and

kill them or drive them away; and, I am sorry to say, the English used to act much in the same manner.

19. The Spaniards who had taken some of the West India Islands, and settled colonies in South America, wanted slaves to work in the gold mines, and their sugar plantations; so an English captain took out some ships to Africa, and carried off a great many negroes, whom he sold in the West Indies, for a large price; and from that time this trade was carried on to a great extent, and was permitted, by government, until the beginning of the present century.

20. But we must now think of what was going on in England. Elizabeth had a cousin, named Mary, who was queen of Scotland, and was next heir to the English crown.

21. She was young and beautiful, and had been married to the king of France, who was now dead; so she had returned to Scotland, and, after a time, married lord Darnley, and had a son, who was our king James the First.

22. Lord Darnley was murdered, and Mary married another lord, who was disliked by the Scots, so that there was a civil war, and she was obliged to resign the crown, and after much ill-treatment, escaped to England, and begged the protection of queen Elizabeth.

23. Now the queen had always been jealous of her, and she was now cruel enough to shut her up in a castle, and, after keeping her a prisoner for eighteen years, in different places, gave orders for her execution, and the unfortunate queen of Scots was beheaded in Fotheringay castle.

24. Soon after this event, news arrived that a large fleet was coming to invade England. The king of Spain, Philip the Second, had been married to our queen Mary; and had offered his hand to queen Elizabeth, but she had resolved not to marry at all, and at any rate, she would not have had Philip, for she did not like him.

25. He was, therefore, offended; and was also angry because the queen had been kind to the Protestants who had fled to England from the Netherlands, for he was king of those countries as well as of Spain; and her admirals having attacked some of his settlements in America, he determined to invade England, and make himself king there too, if he could.

26. He got ready the largest fleet that was ever known, and called it the Invincible Armada; but it did not prove to be invincible, although the English had but a very small navy at that time, not more than fifteen ships of war; but the merchants lent their ships, and manned

them at their own expense; and people of all classes gave money to pay soldiers, to defend the country, in case the Spaniards should effect a landing.

27. But they never did land; for the English vessels, though so much smaller than Spanish ships, were lighter, and more manageable, and kept them from coming near the shore; and when they anchored off Calais, the English admiral sent fire ships among them, and burnt some of them, which created such terror, that they sailed away as fast as they could, some one way and some another, and the English ships chased them and disabled a great many; while others were wrecked by a violent storm; and thus the Armada was nearly destroyed.

28. Small handbills were printed and sent about the country, to let the people know that the danger was over.

29. Many more books were now published, and there were many clever authors in this reign, especially Shakespeare, who wrote a number of beautiful plays.

30. The queen was a great admirer of Shakespeare's plays, and used to go to see them acted; but the theatres were then not much better than the shows at a country fair, and the performance was in the day time.

31. People of fashion, in those days, dined at eleven o'clock ; the merchants and tradespeople, at twelve ; and laborers, at one ; and all public amusements were between dinner and supper, which was taken about six.

32. These amusements did not show very good taste, for gentlemen and ladies of rank used to go and see cock fighting, and bull and bear baiting, which are cruel disgusting exhibitions, and I only mention them to show you the difference between the manners at that time and this.

33. I will now give you an idea what kind of dress people used to wear in the time of queen Elizabeth. The gowns were open before, with a stiff bodice, just like a pair of stays, laced in front, and a large ruff round the neck.

34. In the street, most ladies used to wear a little black velvet mask, and shoes with such high heels they could scarcely walk in them. Gentlemen wore short jackets, reaching a little below the waist, with a belt and sword, a cloak, and a high-crowned hat.

35. One great improvement was made in dress in this reign, by the invention of stockings, which, for a long time, were all knitted ; but they were found much more convenient than the cloth hose, that every body used to wear, till then.

36. Queen Elizabeth died, after a long, pros-

pérous and peaceful reign, of forty-five years, in 1603, having named for her successor, her cousin, James Stuart, king of Scotland: and thus the two kingdoms of England and Scotland came to be united, and took the name of Great Britain.

QUESTIONS.

1. What was the character of queen Elizabeth?
4. What was the fashion of riding at this period?
5. Mention the good and bad features of Elizabeth's government.
6. How were new manufactures brought into England, and what were they?
8. What provision was made for the poor?
9. When was the Royal Exchange built, and by whom?
10. What was the origin of the East India Company?
13. Who was the first English captain that sailed round the world?
15. What honors were bestowed on him on his return?
19. How was the slave trade begun?
26. What was the Spanish Armada?
29. What celebrated author lived in this reign?
36. When did Elizabeth die?

CHAPTER XV.

THE STUARTS. FROM THE UNION TO THE
REVOLUTION.—1603 TO 1689.



CROMWELL EXPELLING THE MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT.

1. THE people of Scotland did not like the union of the two kingdoms, at first, because the

king and many of the nobility went away to live in London, which, as there was little trade, left Scotland in a very poor condition; and it was a long time, indeed, not before the people had experienced the great benefits of British trade and commerce, that they began to feel as a part of the English nation; but now that the English and Scots have become like one people, it is certainly much happier and better for both.

2. James had not been king two years, when a conspiracy was formed against the government, called the Gunpowder Plot. I cannot tell you for certain by whom it was contrived, but it was a wicked scheme to blow up the houses of parliament, when the king, and most of the lords and commons were there assembled; but, happily, it was discovered a short time before the meeting of parliament, and all the greatest men in the country were saved from a dreadful death.

3. James the First was not a good king, for he had a mistaken notion that a king ought to do whatever he liked; and that, if he wanted money he had a right to make new taxes, without the consent of parliament, and, in fact, he thought it unnecessary to have any parliament at all, and he taught his son Charles to be of the same opinion, which was the cause of that

monarch's untimely fate, and the civil wars that you will presently read about.

4. In the reign of James the First, there were such severe laws against those who did not conform to the church of England, that hundreds of people emigrated to America, and settled themselves in colonies in a wild country, where at first they suffered many hardships and privations; but these colonies, and others, afterwards formed, gradually improved, till they became large flourishing states, now called the United States of America.

5. James the First reigned twenty-two years, and was succeeded, in the year 1625, by his son Charles, whose bad education led to all the miseries of a long civil war, and to misfortunes that fell upon his own head.

6. The quarrels between Charles and the parliament, arose from his taking upon himself the power of raising money by taxes, without the consent of the House of Commons; and in other things he chose to act by his own will, although it might be quite contrary to the laws of the country.

7. Many people were put in prison because they would not lend him money when he desired it; and, at last, he dissolved the parliament altogether, and said he would govern without one,

and then the people had no protection from his tyranny.

8. Those who were treated the worst were the Puritans, a religious sect, whose form of worship was very similar to that of the present Scottish Church, which is different from the English, as they have no bishops, do not use prayer books, and have particular rules about choosing their own clergymen.

9. The Scots who hold these opinions are called Presbyterians. The Puritans dressed very plainly, like quakers, and had their hair cut close, and on that account they obtained the name of Roundheads; and those who took part against the king in the civil war, generally adopted that fashion, and were distinguished by that name.

10. After a time, the king began to find that, if he continued to govern by himself, there would certainly be a serious rebellion; so he consented to have a new parliament, and there was an election directly, and as many of the new members were Puritans, they perhaps wanted the king to yield too much, and thus provoked him not to give up so much as he ought.

11. I cannot tell how this might be; but a great many people at length began to think it would be better to have a Republic, that is, a

government without a king, and many of the Puritans were of that opinion.

12. Charles had undoubtedly brought all his troubles upon himself, but it was now evident he must either give up his authority as a sovereign, or fight to maintain it; so he chose the latter alternative, and a war was commenced between the king and the parliament. Each party raised a large army.

13. The queen, who was sister to the French king, went to France, to raise money to pay soldiers to fight for her husband, and to bring arms for them. He was supported by most of the English nobility, while the principal commoners sided with the parliament.

14. The first general for the parliament was the Earl of Essex, who resigned in favor of general Fairfax, but the greatest general of the parliamentary army was a country gentleman named Oliver Cromwell, who was very clever, both as a military officer and a statesman; and, after the death of Charles, he became the ruler of England.

15. The war caused a great deal of unhappiness in private families; for, although it was principally the soldiers who fought, every body was interested in the question whether there should be a king, or not; and such violent quar-

rels arose, that the nearest relatives, even fathers and sons, and brothers often became enemies, and many young men went to join one army, or the other ; so that sometimes two brothers might be on different sides ; and then think how dreadful it was, when a battle took place, that they should be fighting against each other.

16. The Royalists, who were called Cavaliers, were known from the Roundheads by their handsome style of dress, for they wore colored doublets made of silk or satin, with lace collars falling over them, and a short cloak over one shoulder. Their hair was curled in long ringlets, and their broad hats adorned with long feathers.

17. There was as much difference in dress between the ladies as the gentlemen, for the female roundheads were very plain and prim in their attire, while the Royalists were dressed in the gayest fashion.

18. I shall not enter into the particulars of the war. It is enough to say that after it had gone on three years, the king was totally defeated, at the battle of Naseby, in Northamptonshire, and soon afterwards was made prisoner.

19. The Republicans then had it all their own way. The king was brought to trial on a charge of having broken the laws of the country ; was

condemned to death, and beheaded at Whitehall, January 30th, 1649.

20. But the civil war did not end with the death of Charles the First, for his son, prince Charles, who was in Holland at the time, went to Scotland, where the generality of the people were not disposed to have a republican government, so they made the prince promise not to interfere with their religion, but to join the Presbyterians, and then they proclaimed him king, and soon raising an army, he marched into England.

21. A battle was fought at Worcester, where Cromwell gained a great victory, and the young king had to make his escape, in disguise, with a few friends, who were anxious to get him safely out of the country; and many curious adventures they met with, for parties of the republican soldiers were sent off in all directions in pursuit of the fugitive prince, who was several times very nearly caught.

22. His escape was chiefly owing to the fidelity of five brothers, named Penderel, farmers and woodmen, who were tenants of a gentleman that was warmly attached to the Royal family. They lent him a woodman's dress, called him Will Jones; and rode about with him, to show

him what houses he might safely go to for shelter and entertainment.

23. On the third day after the battle, he was obliged to hide in a wood, in Boscobel, on the borders of Staffordshire, where he met with a friend, Major Carlis, who was hiding himself.

24. They heard soldiers about the wood, so they both got up into an old oak tree, with some bread and cheese and beer, that one of the Penderels had brought to Charles, and while they were there, they heard the soldiers talking close under the tree, and saying how glad they should be to find the king, and that they were sure he must be somewhere thereabouts.

25. The tree was afterwards called the Royal Oak; and there is a tree now on the same spot, raised from an acorn of the original one, which is still distinguished by that name.

26. One time he travelled with a lady, as her groom, and when they stopped at an inn, he went into the kitchen, where the cook told him to wind up the jack, which he did so awkwardly, that she scolded him.

27. He made an excuse, saying that where he came from, they did not have roast meat very often, and never used a jack; but I dare say, he laughed heartily afterwards, for he was always merry in the midst of his troubles.

28. At last, after being at hide and seek for nearly two months, he embarked at Shoreham, and reached the continent in safety.

29. Great Britain was now not a kingdom, for there was no king, but it was a Republic, or Commonwealth, which is a government managed by the people, or their representatives in parliament.

30. But Oliver Cromwell was an ambitious man, and wanted to have all the power in his own hands; so he got the soldiers on his side, and then told the members of parliament that it was time for them to go out of office, that there might be a new election; and on their refusal, he went to the House of Commons with a regiment of soldiers, turned out the members, locked the doors, and took away the keys.

31. He soon formed a new Parliament of men who were devoted to his interest, and he was made chief ruler of the state, under the name of Protector of the Commonwealth; but he might as well have been called king, for he was almost as absolute a sovereign as any that had yet reigned.

32. However, he made a good use of his power by promoting trade, and foreign commerce, besides which, he had an excellent army, and a good navy, so that England was considered of

more importance, by other nations, than it had ever been before.

33. The English Admiral, Blake, gained some great victories over the Dutch at sea ; and some conquests were made both in the East and West Indies, particularly that of Jamaica, which was taken from the Spaniards.

34. The English people obeyed Cromwell more from fear than love, yet he had so many great qualities that he was respected, as well as feared. Milton, the poet, was one of his secretaries, and was much attached to him, as I believe most people were, who belonged to his domestic circle, for Cromwell was kind and mild in his family, although severe and determined in his public character.

35. There was not much merriment in England, while he was its ruler, for the Puritans thought it sinful to dance, or feast, or sing, or play at any games ; so all the theatres and other places of public amusement were ordered to be shut up, even at Christmas, which had previously been a very gay time, when every body, rich or poor, used to make holiday for twelve days ; and in every country mansion, there was a good Christmas dinner, and plenty of fun afterwards, old and young playing at forfeits, blindman's

buff, and other Christmas gambols, in the great hall.

36. But these frolics were forbidden in Cromwell's time, and if any merry-hearted folks indulged in such doings, it was by stealth, and they kept it secret.

37. The prim dress, and hats with high crowns, were worn by both sexes; for if any persons had dressed in a gayer fashion, they would have been taken for Royalists. Cromwell died six years after he was made Protector, and ten from the death of Charles the First.

38. A great many improvements were made during the Commonwealth; for instance, coffee, sugar, and India muslins, were first brought to this country.

39. When Oliver Cromwell was dead, his son Richard was made Protector; but he liked a quiet life, and soon gave up the troublesome task of ruling the country; and as most people were now of opinion it was better to have a king than not, the parliament resolved to recall Charles, who was residing in Holland, and messengers were sent to tell him that he would be restored to the throne, on condition that all persons should have liberty to follow their religious belief, and that no one should be punished for

having taken part against him, or his father, before.

40. He returned to England, and entered London in great state, on the 29th of May, 1660, on which day, every year, you may always hear the bells ringing, to commemorate the restoration of Charles the Second.

41. But the rejoicing is because the old form of government was restored; for Charles was not, by any means, a good sovereign, nor had he one quality to be admired, except that he was good natured to those about him, and liked to make fun of every thing. However, I must not forget to say that he rewarded the Penderels, who had been so kind to him in his misfortunes.

42. England was now quite a different place from what it had been. Every body might be as merry as they chose; the theatres were re-opened; holidays kept; the villagers danced round their may-poles as they used to do, and were not afraid to laugh and sing; while the towns-people had their pleasant social meetings, and the London citizens their grand feasts, and fine shows, as in the days of Elizabeth.

43. During the Commonwealth, there were no bishops, nor any music allowed in the churches; but now, the bishops were restored to their for-

mer dignity, and beautiful church music was again heard.

43. But, I am sorry to say, the king did not keep his promise to let all persons enjoy their own religion, which caused a great deal of unhappiness, for numbers of families, to escape being put in prison, or having their property taken from them, left their comfortable homes, and went to settle in the new American colonies, where they had to endure many hardships, for it is a long time before the people in new settlements can obtain the means of living in any degree of comfort.

44. About five years after the return of king Charles, the plague broke out in London, and continued to rage for many months with fearful violence.

45. The streets were, at that time, narrow and dirty; the houses mostly of wood, and not airy; nor was the city so well paved or cleansed, nor so well supplied with water, as at present, consequently it was not so healthy; and then, the doctors were not so clever as they are now, so that many died, who perhaps might have been saved.

46. It was a melancholy time. The houses were all shut up; no business was transacted, and scarcely any body was to be seen in the

streets, which were sad and silent, for death was in almost every house.

47. The king and queen, and most of the great people, went out of town, but some of the clergymen and other benevolent persons, stayed to do what good they could, and some of them caught the infection, and died.

48. At last, when the heat of the summer was over, the plague began to abate, and those who had survived it, returned to their usual occupations; but with sorrowful hearts, for most of them had to mourn the loss of their dearest friends.

49. The plague had often raged in London before, but had never been so bad; and perhaps the great fire that followed it, tended greatly to remove the cause of this dreadful distemper.

50. The memorable fire of London happened September, 1666. It began at a baker's shop, near London-bridge, and spread rapidly from street to street, till almost all the town was in flames.

51. It continued to burn for three days, and destroyed nearly the whole city, with most of the churches and public buildings; but there were very few lives lost, as the people fled from their houses when they saw the fire approaching the street in which they lived.

52. Many, however, were ruined by the loss of their property, and all were left houseless, so that they had to set up tents in the fields, to shelter themselves till they could find some place to go to; and subscriptions were made for the relief of those who were most in need, for generally the respectable citizens had saved their plate, jewels, and money.

53. The fire put an end to the pestilence, and so far proved a benefit, in the end; for the city was rebuilt with wider streets; the houses were built of brick or stone, and altogether it was handsomer and more healthy; one proof of which is, that the plague has not been known in London since.

54. The visitation of the cholera, in 1829-30, although partaking somewhat of the character of a plague, was a different disease, and yielded to cleanliness and medical treatment.

55. It was about this time, that tea was first brought to England, from China, by the East India Company; but it was so very dear, that a pound of tea was thought a handsome present, and it was a very long while before people drank it as they do now.

56. Except in London, Liverpool, and some of the principal towns, nobody had ever heard of such a thing as tea; for there was but little

intercourse between London and the country towns at that time, as the roads were still bad, and there were no stage coaches till a few years after the death of Charles the Second, and then only on three or four of the principal roads.

57. The rich country gentlefolks lived in a plain homely way, and their daughters were brought up to assist in domestic duties, such as washing, ironing, cooking, knitting, and many other useful things; but they seldom had any other accomplishments, and very few could read or write.

58. Charles the Second died in 1685, twenty-five years after his restoration, and was succeeded by his brother James, who was a Catholic, and tried to restore the Catholic religion, although he had promised not to do so.

59. The people soon began to feel that he did not mind breaking the laws to accomplish this object; so a great many Protestant noblemen and gentlemen agreed that it would be better to take the crown from him, and to place on the throne a prince of another family, for they said, the laws would never be rightly observed so long as the Stuarts, or a Catholic king, reigned; so they sent to William, prince of Orange, who was married to the king's daughter, Mary, and asked

him to become king of England, and he consented.

60. He came, with a large army, to Torbay, in Devonshire; but there was no fighting, for king James, with his wife and infant son, fled to France, where he was kindly received by the French king, Louis the Fourteenth, who promised to try and replace him on the throne; but the attempt was unsuccessful, as you will presently see.

61. James the Second had only reigned in England three years, and during that time the Protestants were so cruelly treated in France, that thousands of industrious artisans came over here, chiefly silk weavers, but also watchmakers, cutlers, and manufacturers of glass, writing paper and many other things; from whom the English learned to make all these things as well as the French.

62. The middle classes were much better off than at any former time, on account of the increase of trade; but the lower orders were not so well off, for wages were less, in proportion to the prices of bread and meat, than they were at earlier periods of our history.

QUESTIONS.

2. What was the gunpowder plot?

3. What was the opinion of the new king with regard to sovereignty?
4. How were the American States first colonized?
5. Who succeeded James the first?
6. What gave rise to quarrels between the king and parliament?
9. Who were the Roundheads?
11. What sort of government was desired by the people?
14. Who was Oliver Cromwell?
16. What were the Cavaliers?
17. What was the ultimate fate of king Charles?
19. Name the date of his death.
20. Did this event put an end to the war?
21. What was the battle of Worcester?
30. How did Cromwell obtain sovereign power?
31. What was his title?
33. What conquests were made in his time?
37. How long did Cromwell rule?
38. What improvements were made in his time?
39. What followed the death of Cromwell?
40. Name the date of the restoration.
44. What calamities befel London in this reign?
50. In what year was the fire of London?
53. Why did it eventually prove a benefit?
55. When was tea first brought to England?
58. How long did Charles the Second reign?
59. Why was James disliked by many of the people?
61. How were the useful arts improved in England, about this time?

CHAPTER XVI.

THE REVOLUTION.—1689 TO 1714.



DUKE OF MARLBOROUGH.

1. THE changes made in the government by taking the crown from James the Second, and giving it to William the Third, was called the Revolution, and was a good thing for England, as it was then settled that no sovereign, in the future, should follow his own will, or act contrary to the laws of the country; that all new laws should be proposed by the parliament,

and not by the king; who was only to have the power of giving or refusing his consent to them; which is very different from being able to make laws without asking any one, as the kings and queens of England had hitherto often done.

2. The way, now, is this:—when a gentleman of the House of Commons, or a nobleman of the House of Lords, thinks of any thing that will be good for the nation, he mentions it to the rest and they all consult about it, every one giving his opinion whether he thinks it good or not; and if the greater number think it will be good, it is settled that it shall be done, if both Houses of Parliament and the sovereign agree to it; for whichever House of Parliament begins and agrees to a measure, it is sent to the other House for approval:—this is called passing the bill.

3. When both Houses have done what they consider good and necessary, it is submitted to the queen or king, who generally approves of it also; and then it becomes a law.

4. Another rule made at the Revolution was, that the parliament should meet every year, and that there should be a new election at least once in three years, to give the people an opportunity of choosing other members, if they had not approved the votes of the old ones; but, in the

reign of George the First, this arrangement was altered to seven years, and so it has continued ever since.

5. It was also agreed that none but a Protestant should ever be king or queen of England; and all these, with many other regulations, were written down, and signed by king William, and this is called the Bill of Rights.

6. No one was to be persecuted on account of his or her religion; but the Catholics were not allowed to hold landed property, or to be members of parliament; and it was not till the reign of George the Fourth that people of the Catholic faith were restored to their ancient rights and privileges.

7. Soon after William was made king, he had to go to Ireland, to fight against James the Second, who had landed there with a French army, thinking the Irish would assist him to recover the throne. But he was defeated in a battle fought on the banks of the river Boyne, and obliged to go back to France, where he lived in retirement for the rest of his life.

8. His daughter, Mary, the wife of king William, was a very amiable woman, and much beloved by the English. It was she who induced the government to convert the palace at Green-

wich into an asylum for poor old sailors ; and the king gave money for the purpose.

9. The East Indian trade was very much increased during this reign, so that all things that came from China and India, such as tea, silk, cotton, spices, porcelain or china ware, and many other beautiful and useful things, became more easy to be procured in this country.

10. I must also tell you that the Bank of England was now first established, for the purpose of raising money for the government to carry on war against Louis the Fourteenth, of France ; and this was the beginning of what you will sometimes hear called the National Debt ; for when people put money into the bank, it is the same as lending it to the king or the government ; and as long as they choose to lend it, they are paid so much a year for doing so, and this is called their dividend, which they go to the Bank twice a year to receive.

11. The war in which king William was engaged, had nothing whatever to do with the English, but was only for the sake of helping the Archduke of Austria, to fight out his quarrels with the king of France ; yet, after William's death, these wars were carried on during the whole reign of queen Anne, who succeeded

William the Third, in the year 1702, after he had reigned thirteen years.

12. These wars caused great distress in England, where the taxes were increased, to pay the expenses of the soldiers, and trade was much injured, as we were at war with both France and Spain.

13. There was a duty, for the first time, laid upon many things that people have to use every day, such as soap, starch, and paper, so that all these articles became much dearer.

14. The meaning of a duty is this:—The parliament says, no person may make any paper, unless he give to the government so much money for every ream he makes; so the paper-makers pay the money, and charge more for their paper to the shopkeepers, who buy it of them; then you and I, and every body who uses paper, must pay more for it than if there was no duty; and the same with all things on which there are duties. So you see the expenses of war fall upon every one, in some way or other.

15. Queen Anne was a daughter of James the Second, but as she was a Protestant, no objection was made to her accession, although her brother was excluded from the throne, as being a Catholic.

16. The most important event that took place

in the reign of queen Anne, was the complete union of England and Scotland, for although they had been governed by one king, since the time of James the First, they had separate parliaments, and different laws; but it was now settled that a certain number of the Scottish lords and commons should sit in the English houses of parliament, and that all the laws about trade, and every thing that did not interfere with the habits or religion of Scotland, should be the same.

17. This union of the parliaments took place in 1707, from which time England and Scotland have been one country, called Great Britain.

18. There was a celebrated General, the Duke of Marlborough, who won some famous battles in Germany in the reign of queen Anne; and there was a brave Admiral, Sir George Rooke, who took the fortress of Gibraltar, which was a conquest of some importance to England, because it stands at the entrance of the Mediterranean sea, and may be said to command the passage taken by ships trading to the Grecian islands, Egypt, Turkey, &c. Queen Anne died in the year 1714, having reigned twelve years.

QUESTIONS.

1. What was meant by the Revolution?
2. What were the changes made in the government?
4. How was the duration of parliaments settled?
5. What was the Bill of Rights?
7. What was the battle of the Boyne?
8. Who was the wife of William the Third?
10. When was the Bank of England established, and why?
11. What was the object of the wars, and how long did they last?
16. What union was effected at this time?
17. When did it take place?
18. When did Queen Anne die?

CHAPTER XVII.

HOUSE OF HANOVER.—1714 TO 1830.



DEATH OF GENERAL WOLFE.

1. WHEN Queen Anne died, the crown of England went to a German prince, named George, the elector or sovereign of Hanover, whose mother was grand-daughter of James the First.

2. He was rather advanced in age, and being a stranger to the manners of the people, and to

the language and laws of the country, was not likely to become a popular monarch; yet it was thought better that he should succeed to the throne, than to let the son of James II., who was now about six-and-twenty, be king of Great Britain.

3. But there were a great many people in Scotland who wished to see the family of their ancient kings restored, and some of the great men, there, raised an army, and invited prince James Stuart, who is usually called the Pretender, to place himself at the head of it, and go to war with George the First.

4. The Pretender went to Scotland, and two battles were fought, one near Dumblane, and the other near Preston, in Lancashire; but the English troops gained the victory at both places, and the prince was glad to get back to France again.

5. A great many English had joined in this rebellion, for, as I said before, the new king was not very generally liked; and it was mostly the English party that fought for the Pretender at Preston, and, I am sorry to say, all who were made prisoners were very cruelly treated. The leaders were put to death, and those who had fought under their command, were mostly sent to America, and sold for slaves.

6. You remember how the American colonies were first settled. Well, they had now become large populous places, and cities had been built there ; but the people were cultivators, and had no manufactures of any kind, for they were obliged to have all they wanted of manufactured goods, either for clothing, or any other purpose, from England, which was a great advantage to this country, by furnishing employment for English manufactures.

7. Perhaps you will say, why could they not have things from other countries, as well as from England ?—but you must bear in mind that the American states were then under British government, and remained so till the reign of George the Third, when the Americans established a government of their own, and went to war with Great Britain, as you will presently read, and with the assistance of France, made themselves independent of this country.

8. George the First died in 1727, having reigned nearly thirteen years, and he was succeeded by his son, George the Second.

9. There had been a great change in the mode of dress since the time of the Stuarts, for queen Anne had introduced a fashion of setting out the gowns with hoops ; and gentlemen wore coats with broad square-cut tails, waistcoats with

long flaps, colored stockings drawn up over the knee, lace ruffles, large shoe buckles, wigs with rows of stiff curls, three-cornered hats bound with gold-lace, and swords.

10. Towards the close of the eighteenth century this formal inconvenient style of dress was altered gradually; swords were left off; the hair which, in the early part of the reign of George the Third, was frizzed out, pomatumed and powdered, was dressed in a more natural manner; round hats came into fashion, and people began to look something like what they do now.

11. The reign of George the Second, which lasted thirty-three years, was on the whole rather a prosperous one, the greater part of it being spent in peace. There was no war for about twelve years, and during that time improvements were going on all over the country.

12. Most of the great towns were made larger, and new manufactories built, for the trade of England was increasing every year, and great quantities of manufactured goods were sent out to foreign countries; besides which, new roads were opened, waste lands cultivated, canals formed, and new harbors made for shipping, so that there was plenty of employment for the laboring people.

13. We had a good navy at this time, and the

first war that broke out was carried on entirely at sea. It was with the Spaniards, who had taken possession of a great part of South America, and, as they chose to keep all the trade to themselves, they had ships constantly sailing about, to prevent the ships of other nations coming there, which was all very fair; but not content with guarding their own possessions, they interfered with British merchants, who were going to or from other places, plundered some of their vessels, and behaved so ill, that the British government was obliged to declare war, and sent out a great many ships to fight the Spaniards.

14. I dare say you have heard stories about press-gangs taking away poor men against their will, to make sailors of them. This cruel expedient for getting plenty of sailors, was resorted to in all the wars during the reigns of George the Second and George the Third, when many a poor fellow, in going to or returning from his daily labor, was met by a party of armed men, called a press-gang, and carried off, by force, to a ship, without being allowed to go home, or take leave of his family. Such things ought not to be done in a free country, and I hope they never will be done again, even if we should have the misfortune to be at war.

15. At this time, the French had large possessions in India, as well as the English, and it seemed doubtful which of the two nations would, in the end, be masters of the country; but this question was decided in the reign of George the Second, for, while the war with Spain was going on, a war broke out between France and England, about the affairs of Germany, where our king himself commanded the army, and fought at the battle of Dettingen; but the fighting between the French and English in India, was of more consequence, as several great victories were gained by a brave commander, named Clive, by which the superiority of the English in India was quite established, and ever since that time, we have gained one place after another, in that extensive and rich country, until a large portion of India has become a province of the British empire.

16. While these wars were going on abroad, there was another great rebellion in Scotland; for prince Charles Edward Stuart, the son of the old Pretender, being now a man, had come there to make another attempt to recover the throne for his father; and being joined by some of the Highland chiefs, and numbers of Scotch people, as well as by many English who were discontented with the government, he went to

Holyrood house, the old palace of his ancestors, at Edinburgh, where he held a court, and behaved as if he had been sovereign of the country.

17. Of course, an army was sent from England, to put down this rebellion, which caused a great deal of misery; for, besides the numbers of brave men that were killed in the several battles which took place, many were afterwards executed as traitors, which must have been more dreadful for their families than if they had fallen in battle.

18. If Charles Edward had any good feeling, I think he must have been very sorry for the mischief he caused. He was finally defeated at the battle of Culloden, and obliged to escape, like Charles the Second, after the battle of Worcester, and his adventures are very similar, but more full of suffering, than those of the merry monarch. This is usually called the Rebellion of '45, because it was in the year 1745.

19. There is only one thing more of importance to mention in the reign of George the Second, and that is the conquest of the large country of Canada, in North America, which had belonged to the French, who had settled there as the English had in the United States, and built several good towns, one of which was Quebec.

20. There had frequently been quarrels between the French and English in America, respecting their possessions, which, at length, occasioned a war there, and soldiers were sent out both from France and England, the French wanting to conquer the British states, the English to gain possession of Canada.

21. This war had lasted about five years, when the renowned General Wolfe gained a great victory at the battle of Quebec; after which, the French gave up Canada, which has belonged to England ever since, and is a very useful possession, supplying abundance of fine corn, and timber for building.

22. General Wolfe was killed on the field of battle, just as the victory was won, and his death was much lamented in England, where the news of the conquest arrived a few days before the death of the king, which happened in October, 1760, after he had reigned thirty-three years.

23. The eldest son of George the Second was dead, but he had left a son, named George, who succeeded his grandfather, and was about twenty-two years old. He was a very good man and was highly respected, although many people say he was more fitted for a country gentleman than a king.

24. He married a German princess, whose name was Charlotte, and they had many children, some of whom are yet living. Our queen is the grand-daughter of George the Third.

25. About two years after the new king came to the throne, peace was made with France and Spain, and there were no more wars for thirteen years, when the Americans became dissatisfied with the English government, and resolved to have a government of their own.

26. But let us see what useful things were done in England during that thirteen years of peace. First of all, the manufacture of China ware was begun in Staffordshire, by a gentleman, named Wedgewood, who built large factories and employed a great number of people in this new branch of art. Then a machine was invented for spinning cotton, by which we were enabled to manufacture cotton goods in much larger quantities than before, and as they could be sold abroad, this was a great benefit.

27. It was also discovered how very useful steam engines might be made; but I fancy nobody then imagined that we should ever travel by steam, or print by steam, or do many other wonderful things, that are now done by that means.

28. Turnpike roads were established all over

the kingdom, and travelling thus rendered safer and more expeditious. People were in general much better educated than in the preceding century, and all arts and sciences were greatly improved.

29. And now I will tell you something about the American war. The quarrel began about some taxes which the British government imposed on the Americans, to help to pay the expenses of the wars with France and Spain, which the Americans thought they had nothing to do with; and considered it unjust that they should have to find money towards paying for them.

30. British troops were sent out, to force them to obey the orders of the government; but instead of complying, all the colonies agreed to join together and fight for their liberty; and a very brave and good man, named General Washington, took the command of the American army.

31. This war lasted many years, and the French and Dutch assisted the Americans with troops, ships, and money.

32. There were many gentlemen in the English parliament who wanted to put an end to the war, by giving up all control over the Americans; but others would not consent, the king was unwilling to do so, till, at last, finding there

was little chance of success, the English government gave up the contest, and the American colonies became independent of England, and took the name of the United States.

33. This event took place in 1783, after which, there were a few more years of peace, and then the long wars with France were begun, which lasted above twenty years, and were ended by the famous battle of Waterloo.

34. The cause of the war was this. There had been a great revolution in France. The people rose up against king Louis the Sixteenth, who was made prisoner, and beheaded; just as Charles the First was treated here, and for much the same cause. Then a number of persons took the government into their own hands, and governed without a king, and declared war against the king of Great Britain, and also against the stadtholder of Holland, and the king of Spain, for disapproving of what the French people had done.

35. The Spaniards and Dutch were afterwards obliged to join the French, and many battles were fought both on land and at sea, and some naval victories were gained by the British Admirals Duncan, Howe, and Nelson, and other officers.

36. The greatest man in France at this time

was Napoleon Bonaparte, an artillery officer, who raised himself to the head of the state, just as Cromwell did here, by getting the soldiers to side with him. He was called consul, at first, but afterwards he was made emperor, and he conquered a great part of Europe, and he made the governments of those countries which he did not conquer do just as he pleased, except England, for he had the largest armies of any sovereign in the world.

37. The most celebrated of our generals in the war against Bonaparte, were Abercrombie, Sir John Moore, and the Duke of Wellington, the last of whom won a great many battles in Spain, and at last, with the assistance of the Prussians, gained the great victory at Waterloo, near Brussels, on the 18th of June, 1815, after which, Bonaparte surrendered to the English, and was banished to a small island, called St. Helena, in the South Atlantic Ocean, where he died in a few years. The fall of Bonaparte was followed by a general peace.

38. George the Third was still living, but he had been out of his mind, and blind, for some time, so that his son George, prince of Wales, had been made regent in the year 1810, and conducted the government with that title, till his father's death, which happened in the year 1820,

he having reigned above fifty-nine years, when George the Fourth became king, instead of regent.

39. But I must now go back some years to tell you of something that was done at the beginning of this century. You have been told that Ireland had been subject to England, ever since the time of Henry the Second; but there had constantly been quarrels and warfare between the native Irish, and the new Irish, who were the descendants of the English, who had settled there, after the conquest.

40. Then the new Irish were just as ready to quarrel with new English settlers, as the old Irish were with them; and, till the last fifty years, little had been done to make the people of Ireland a better or a happier race. They had a parliament of their own, but it did not encourage the people to be industrious, so they were, of course, very poor.

41. A few years after the war with France began, there was a great rebellion in Ireland, and soldiers were sent from England, to put a stop to it, which I am afraid was not done without a great deal of cruelty; but it was in consequence of this rebellion that the English government resolved that the parliament and country of Ireland should be united to that of England; as

the parliament and country of Scotland had been, and this union took place on the first of January, 1801, which you will easily remember, because it was the first day of the nineteenth century.

42. Many good laws have been made since then, for the benefit of Ireland, and much been done to improve the country; but numbers of the Irish people still remain in a very distressed condition, and some of them wanted to have a separate Parliament again; and this is what is meant by Repeal of the Union; but this feeling is now fast dying away.

43. In the reign of George the Third, there were National and Sunday schools established in almost every part of England, so that the poor people might be able to have their children taught to read and write, which was a great blessing to them; for although there had long been charity schools in London, there were few in the country, and many of the shopkeepers in country towns, who had become quite respectable people by their industry, were so ignorant that they could not even make out their own bills, or keep their own accounts.

44. There were two more great improvements before the death of George the Third; the one was the invention of gas lights, which make the streets much lighter at night than the dim oil

lamps that were formerly used; and the other was the introduction of steam boats, which had lately been invented in America.

QUESTIONS.

1. Who succeeded queen Anne?
3. Who was the Pretender?
4. What was the Rebellion?
5. How did it end?
6. What was the state of the American colonies at this period
8. Who succeeded George the First?
12. How was the country improved in this reign?
13. With whom did the English go to war, and why?
14. How were sailors forcibly obtained?
15. Were there any other wars in this reign?
16. What was the Rebellion of '45?
18. Where was the final battle fought?
19. What great conquest was made in this reign?
20. What gave rise to the war?
21. What battle decided the contest
22. Which of our Generals was killed in the moment of victory?
23. Who succeeded George the Second?
29. What was the cause of the American war?
30. Who was the leader of the Americans?
32. How did the war terminate?
34. What gave rise to the last war with France?
36. Who was Bonaparte?
37. What victory put an end to the war?
38. Who ruled in England at this time?
41. When did the Union with Ireland take place?
42. What other improvements took place during the reign of George III.?

CHAPTER XVIII.

FROM THE DEATH OF GEORGE THE THIRD,
1830, TO THE PRESENT TIME.



QUEEN VICTORIA'S VISIT TO THE CITY OF LONDON.

1. GEORGE the Fourth, who had been regent ten years, reigned as a king from 1820, to 1830. During that time, every improvement that had been begun was carried to a greater extent. The education of all classes of people was conducted on a better system, and greater numbers

of cheap books were published for the instruction of the working classes.

2. London was greatly improved by the building, in some parts, of wide handsome streets, in the place of narrow, dirty, crowded ones, and the manners of the English were improved also, by their intercourse with foreign nations; for after the peace, people began to visit France, Italy, and other parts of Europe, while a great number of foreigners came here, and we adopted such of their customs as were superior to our own; for people may always improve from each other.

3. The French, German, and Italian languages began to be more generally studied in England; and the arts and sciences, especially painting and music, were more highly cultivated.

4. But I am sorry to say that, amid all these benefits, there was a great deal of distress among the laboring people, for the expenses of the war had been so heavy that it was some years before the blessings of peace could be felt; and thus all the necessaries of life continued to be very dear, and wages, in proportion, very low, which occasioned riots in many parts of the kingdom; for the poor people had expected that, as soon as there was peace, most of the taxes pressing on them would be taken off.

5. But the government thought it right first to take off the property tax, and then found they could not do without the money the other taxes produced. Then the people, not getting relief from the taxation, thought some alterations in the laws might remedy their distress, and sent petitions to parliament praying that these alterations might be made. The principal thing they wanted was, what you have perhaps heard called the Reform Bill.

6. This was a law to give the right of voting for members of parliament to a greater number of people, and also to make alterations with regard to the places that were allowed to send members to parliament; for there were many old boroughs that were formerly important places, but now had scarcely a house left standing, yet still were represented by two members in parliament; which was ridiculous, because the object of sending a member to parliament is, that he may do all the good he can for the people of the place he represents, as well as for the nation; then there were many large towns, such as Manchester, Birmingham, Glasgow, &c., that had grown into importance since the time when it was settled what places should have representatives, and these had none at all.

7. Another thing desired by the people, was

an alteration in the Corn Laws, so that bread might be cheaper; and this alteration was to be made by letting corn be brought from abroad without paying duty. Neither of these points were gained while George the Fourth was king; but the Reform Bill was passed during the reign of his successor, William the Fourth; and, in the year 1846, some important alterations were made in the corn and provision laws.

8. William the Fourth was the brother of George the Fourth, and, on the death of that monarch, in 1830, succeeded to the throne.

9. That same year is memorable for the opening of the first Railway for travelling, which was that between Manchester and Liverpool; a circumstance that may be mentioned as the commencement of one of the greatest changes of modern times, and when we consider the number and extent of the railways now in use, we cannot but admire the immense works of the kind that have been performed in so short a space of time.

10. The speed with which we can now travel, both by sea and land, would astonish our good old ancestors, who used to think it a great and dangerous undertaking to set out on a journey of twenty or thirty miles.

11. In the time of Charles the Second, the

poet Cowley, who had a country house at Chertsey, which is only twenty-two miles from London, invited a friend in town to pay him a visit, saying in his letter, that as he could not perform the whole journey in one day, he might sleep at Hampton.

12. I think he would have been glad of a railway, which would have taken him all the way before breakfast. In 1706, the stage coach from York was four days coming to London; and so late as 1763, there was only a coach once a month from Edinburgh to London; and it was a whole fortnight on the road; so I think you will see the advantages of our present mode of travelling.

13. The custom of buying and selling negroes had been abolished by parliament during the reign of George the Third, but there were many thousands of slaves in the West India islands, belonging to the British planters there.

14. During the reign of William the Fourth, the British government gave twenty millions of money to buy all the slaves of their masters and then set them free. The day when the negroes became free people was the first of August, 1838.

15. I told you that the Reform Bill was passed in this reign. One consequence of this measure

was, the lessening of the duties, or taxes, on many articles of necessity, thereby reducing their prices, so that the poor people could live much better than they had formerly.

16. The harvests were also plentiful for several years, so that bread was very cheap, and the prices of all kinds of clothing were less than in previous years.

17. Upon the whole, there had never been a better time in England than the seven years that William the Fourth occupied the throne. He died in 1837, and was succeeded by her present Majesty, queen Victoria, who was the daughter of his deceased brother, the Duke of Kent.

18. In 1840, she married her cousin, Prince Albert, of Saxe Coburg and Gotha. Their family now consists of eight children, four princes, and four princesses.

19. The most remarkable events that have yet happened in the reign of queen Victoria, are the wars in China and India: but I ought to have mentioned an alteration made in the last reign, with regard to the East India trade, which you, perhaps, remember was carried on solely by the East India Company, according to a charter granted by queen Elizabeth, and renewed, from time to time, by other sovereigns.

20. In 1813, however, it was made lawful for

private merchants to trade to India ; but this right was not extended to the trade with China, which was still confined to the Company till 1833, when a new law was made with regard to that also, and any person then was at liberty to go to China for tea, silk, and other commodities, which have since been much cheaper in consequence. Tea is little more than half the price it used to be, which is a great benefit and comfort to the poor.

21. But this had nothing to do with the war in China, which arose from a dispute about the British merchants selling opium to the Chinese, who were forbidden by their emperor to buy it, because it injures the health of those who take it, like drinking spirits.

22. Still the merchants continued to carry opium to China, and the people to buy it ; so the governor at Canton, the only Chinese town in which foreigners were allowed to trade, seized and burnt some ship-loads of opium, for which he would not pay the owners ; and this was the cause of the war.

23. There were several battles fought, in which the Chinese were always defeated, for they were not much acquainted with the present art of war ; but, at last, after three years of warfare, peace was made with the British ; and

the Chinese emperor agreed to pay a sum of money, and to cede, or give up, to the British government, the Island of Hong Kong ; besides agreeing that English ships might land goods for sale, at five ports, instead of one only, and that British merchants might have warehouses, and reside at those places. A treaty to this effect was signed in August, 1842.

24. The war in India, was much more serious, and lasted a great deal longer. It was begun for the purpose of restoring to his throne an Indian prince, the king of Caboul, who had been deprived of his kingdom by another prince.

25. The wars occasioned by this usurpation being likely to endanger the safety of the British possessions, the Governor General thought it necessary to interfere ; and from the year 1839 to that of 1846, the British armies in India were engaged in terrible and destructive wars with the Affghans, and other nations in the north and west of India.

26. These calamitous strifes were happily ended by two great victories gained on the banks of the Sutlej, at the beginning of 1846, the one by General Sir Harry Smith, the other, by General Sir Hugh Gough. By the conquests made during these wars, the British empire is extended over the greater part of India.

27. Among the important inventions of this reign, may be mentioned that of the Electric Telegraph, by means of which communications can be made between places a hundred miles apart in one moment, or indeed to any imaginable distances.

28. I have already mentioned the distressed condition of great numbers of the Irish people; and am sorry to have now to say that their misery has been greatly increased in the last three years, by the failure of the potato crops, on which the lower orders in Ireland depend for their subsistence.

29. This food they can, with two or three months labor in the year, grow for themselves; and as they are, unfortunately, contented with such poor living, it is a very sad thing for them when a bad season occurs, and the potatoes are spoiled; which happens generally once in six or seven years.

30. But there have now been three bad seasons following each other; and this calamity has caused so much distress, that thousands have died of fevers and other diseases, occasioned by want of wholesome and sufficient food.

31. The Parliament expended several millions of money in relieving their distresses, and providing them employment. Large sums of mo-

ney were also subscribed by individuals in England, Scotland, and America, for the relief of the people in Ireland; and charitable committees were formed in many parts of that country to receive the money, and distribute the food and clothing purchased with it.

32. New poor laws have also been made by the government, to afford greater relief to the destitute; and every thing has been done, that humanity could suggest, to better their condition and relieve their wants.

33. The year 1848 will ever be memorable for the revolutions that have taken place in France and other parts of the continent. Louis Philippe, the French king, was dethroned on the 24th of February, 1848, and fled with his family, to England.

34. At Berlin, the capital of Prussia, there was also an insurrection in March, 1848, when a frightful battle was fought in the streets, between the soldiers and the people.

35. Great numbers of persons were killed on both sides, and many houses were destroyed; and although peace was restored by the king granting the demands of his subjects, yet that could not bring back happiness to those who had lost their fathers, husbands, or brothers, in the fatal conflict.

36. Besides those already named, revolutions, attended with great loss of life and destruction of property, have taken place at Vienna, the capital of Austria, and other parts of Germany. Italy, too, has shared in the spread of revolution; Naples, Milan, and Venice, having been scenes of fearful tumult and destruction of life.

37. In most of the places I have mentioned, the people having been fighting for a constitutional form of government, similar to that of our own happy united kingdom; conveying the strongest proof that we ought not to wish for a change. Yet there have been some attempts made to disturb the peace of this country, by ill-informed or worthless persons.

38. Perhaps the desire for some increase in the number of the electors, and in the places represented in parliament, by uniting the adjacent towns to the small boroughs, is not unreasonable.

39. But when we think of the dreadful state of things in France, Italy and Germany, where so many thousands of people have lost their lives, where trade is ruined, where the middle classes are reduced to poverty, and the working people, in consequence, starving, for want of employment, we cannot be too thankful for the

peace, the liberty, and prosperity, we enjoy in this more favored and happier country.

QUESTIONS.

1. Who succeeded George the Third?
6. What was the Reform Bill?
8. Who succeeded George the Fourth, and in what year?
9. When was the first Railway opened?
13. When was slavery abolished in the West Indies?
17. When did William the Fourth die?
17. When did Victoria ascend the throne?
18. Who did Victoria marry?
19. Name the principal events of her reign.
22. What gave rise to the war in China?
23. How did it end?
24. Why was the war in India commenced?
26. What has been the result?
28. What has caused great misery in Ireland?
31. What has been done for the relief of the Irish people?
33. What has taken place in France?
36. Where have other Revolutions taken place?

THE END.

1873.

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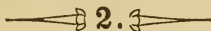
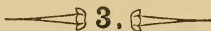
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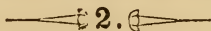
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